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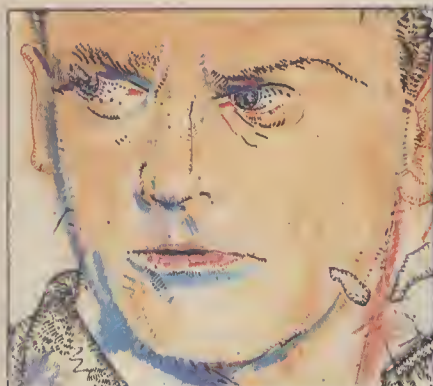
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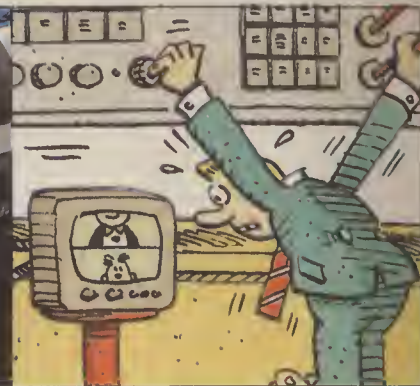
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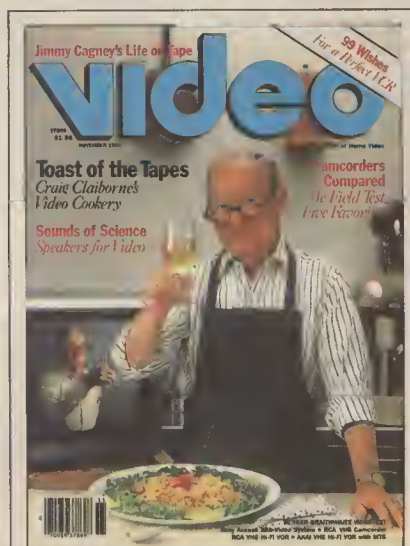
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# Channel One

## What's Cooking

Our cover model this month should be familiar to any of you who have ever cooked a Thanksgiving dinner. If your relationship with your kitchen doesn't go beyond taking out the garbage or carving a turkey, you probably have at least *heard* of Craig Claiborne. He is the doyen of American cuisine, born Southern (Sunflower, Mississippi), now food editor of *The New York Times*. In addition Claiborne is a prodigious author of memoir-*cum*-recipe books. He has cooked for presidents as well as locals (he lives in East Hampton, Long Island, on Clam Shell Avenue—honest), and he puts affection and enthusiasm in every dish.

For our cover photo Claiborne happily whipped up Chiffonade of Lobster Chez Denis, one of the recipes featured on his new cooking videotape. This dish comes from one of the more famous—or infamous, as Claiborne recalled—meals ever consumed by two people. Ten years ago Claiborne and a companion spent \$4000 for dinner in Paris as winners of a raffle. When he finished, he wrote a story about it which the *Times* published on page one. The story generated an enormous amount of mail—much of it negative.

When we first saw his *Craig Claiborne's New York Times Video Cookbook* we were impressed for two reasons: First, the production values were high for the how-to field, which normally doesn't achieve such quality. Second, most video producers somehow think it's a natural act to just haul your VCR and TV into your kitchen while you whip up *coquilles St. Jacques*. The Claiborne tape is cleverly packaged. It includes a small booklet of all the recipes on the tape, which you can stand next to a mixing bowl. So when you've forgotten whether Craig said two tablespoons of flour or three, you need only glance at the recipe rather than rewind the tape.

In the last *News & Views* that the late Ken Winslow wrote (October), he couldn't hide his wild excitement for this tape. He called it the *piece de resistance* of recent cooking releases and confessed that he was glued to his screen for the full hour and a half "and wasn't bored for a minute."

So it shouldn't have surprised us that we would agree so heartily with our esteemed colleague. One editor here, referred to in previous columns as the young curmudgeon, decided to take a quick look at this cooking tape late in the evening while lounging in his bedclothes. Like Winslow, he watched the entire tape and then fast forwarded himself right into his kitchen to make a dish. Talk about suggestive videotapes. If food were sex, this certainly would be X-rated. Claiborne, by the way, has a VCR (a trusty Sony Betamax SL-5400).

\* \* \*

Speaking of X-rated video, subscribers' letters often complain that their names have been rented by VIDEO Magazine to distributors of hardcore sex material. We emphatically state that we take careful measures *not* to rent our list to purveyors of such goods. We haven't in the past, we don't do so now, and we don't plan to do it in the future. So how did they get your name? The list appears to have been stolen. Mailing-list security is one of the direct-mail business's most difficult problems, believe it or not, and we are taking further steps to eliminate such unauthorized mailings in the future.

Finally, a number of readers have also complained that we've taken ads from unscrupulous mail-order firms. The letters follow a common thread: a consumer sends a check or gives a credit-card number over the phone to buy a tape or video gear and the products never arrive. Follow-up letters and phone calls bring no satisfaction. Our advertising department tracks each complaint and does its best to see that readers aren't cheated. If we hear of continuing problems with any advertiser, we stop accepting its ads.

—The Editors

## video

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# Fast Forward

## Late-Breaking News

### The Big Chill

With cable programmers investigating signal scramblers and home dish owners reading about decoders, 1986 was supposed to be the year for satellite scrambling to turn from a threat into a reality (see "Off the Air"). But the Big Chill arrived early as Time Inc.'s Home Box Office quietly began to scramble its satellite feeds for up to 18 hours a day.

The Society for Private & Commercial Earth Stations immediately charged that HBO violated a promise to delay its scrambling until decoders become more available. James Mooney, head of the National Cable Television Association, countered that it was "chutzpah" to require pay-TV "to allow its product to be intercepted by people who don't want to pay for the service."

More to the point, HBO's action may scramble efforts by the NCTA to establish a uniform system to code and decode satellite transmissions. Under its proposal, broadcasters will offer backyard dish owners "lifetime service" to encourage them to buy programming. But if a hodgepodge of systems takes root instead, dish owners may face sharply diminished reception or the unappetizing prospect of buying several decoders. Cable owners, meanwhile, may not only lose subscribers but find themselves too divided by internal bickering to repel congressional attempts to put scrambling on hold for two years and regulate what they can charge backyard dishers for scramble-free service.

### They Got Their MTV

MTV has a new boss, Viacom International. The cable conglomerate paid \$500 million to Warner Communications for its two-thirds share of MTV Networks, which includes the VH-1 and Nickelodeon channels along with MTV. As part of the deal, Warner also turned over its stake in Showtime/The Movie Channel, which has 8.5 million paying subscribers, and received from Viacom the right to buy more than 2 million shares of its stock at set prices.

Most videoclip fans should be hard-pressed to notice any difference as a result of the sale. The exception will be among MTVphiles whose enthusiasm sent them investing in the nascent channel when its first stock-offering drew a risky \$15 a share. If they kept the faith, the value of their investment has more than doubled in the past year.

### One B-MAC to Go

B-MAC, though it sounds like something Ronald McDonald might serve, is a new high-definition color technology that promises to radically improve TV transmission via satellite. The Private Satellite Network is trying it out for the next two years with its business customers at a cost of \$4 million.

Scientific Atlanta, which developed B-MAC (for Multiple Analog Component), says the system's combined analog and digital signal offers clear, sharp colors, audio comparable with Compact Discs, six audio

or data channels in addition to the video feed, a utility channel for downloading computer information, better bad-weather performance, video for computer workstations, IBM compatibility, and—this year's ultimate attraction—better scrambling capabilities.

There's more at stake than meets the eye. Other companies, including RCA, are experimenting with similar but incompatible high-definition systems. But the first system out of the lab will have a healthy head start at establishing a standard.

### Point and Shoot

RCA has high hopes for camcorders, especially its own streamlined Pro Wonder (see "Videotests" for review). Jack Sauter, vice president of RCA's consumer electronics group, predicts about 330,000 camcorder sales this year and 600,000 next year—if video buffs cooperate. However, Sauter had harsh words for a less costly video staple, VCRs with wired remote controls. "I don't even consider it a product," he said.

### Video on Video

With how-to tapes proliferating faster than killer bees, it always struck us as odd that so few VCRs come with detailed instructions in cassette form about how to hook up and use video components. Mitsubishi, Minolta and RCA have made limited attempts to explain their video products on tape. But, for the most part, firms don't listen to their own catechism about the educational value of how-to vid-

eo. Word comes now that Zenith is including a complete video backup of the instruction manual for its new line of VCRs. Sounds like a move consumers will appreciate.

### Mm Mm Good

Fans of 8mm video should be able to put aside their home movies in favor of real movies by the end of the year as the trickle of prerecorded cassettes swells to the size of, well, at least a rivulet. Latest news is that Sony is releasing 15 new 8mm titles in the U.S. and another 50 in Britain. Some of the videos on tap are Tina Turner's *Private Dancer Tour*, *We're All Devo*, Albert Hunter's *Jazz in the Smithsonian*, and *The Hobbit*. Other releases include 10 family-oriented titles by International Video Entertainment, and a collection of children's videos early next year by SQN Corporation.

For those yet to adopt the cigarette-pack sized cassettes Vestron is readying an hour-long Peter Townsend extravaganza called *White City* while Thorn EMI/HBO will herald the new year with *Rambo: First Blood, Part II*. We wonder: will the latter come with the Coleco doll as a tie-in?

### Mini Explosion

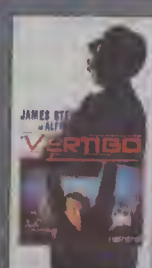
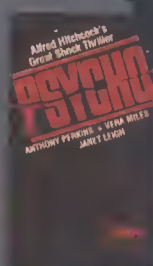
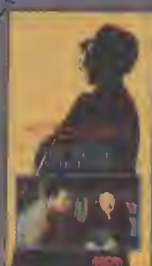
Speaking of small formats, TV monitors with screens six inches or less scored a surprise coup earlier this year by leading second-quarter black and white TV imports for the first time. By mid-year, the tiny tubes were running 163 percent ahead of 1984's pace.



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# Feedback

## Readers Air Their Views

### Crazy 8mm

In your article "8mm Makes its Move" (September 1985) you state that the audio quality of Beta Hi-Fi is clearly superior to 8mm's digital sound. I disagree. You probably based your statement on the frequency response roll off above 15,000 Hz. Most adults cannot even hear past 15,000 Hz. In every other category (dynamic range, signal to noise ratio, wow and flutter, distortion, etc.), 8mm digital is superior. In addition, true video and audio dubs are not possible with Beta Hi-Fi, since the video and audio are recorded together. This is not true with 8mm digital. Furthermore, many Beta Hi-Fi prerecorded movies exhibit an annoying buzz during quiet passages. You have observed this also and mentioned it in a report comparing video Hi-Fi systems. This should not be present in 8mm digital.

Ron Brown  
Okemos, Mich.

In your September "Channel One" column, you wrote that in less than two years ("beginning of 1987") 8mm video will take over. If the public wanted "small size" and "quality," Beta would have buried VHS long ago. Besides we all know that people buy what their friends have, and I doubt whether too many "friends" will have 8mm in less than two years. In the same column you wrote that audio cassettes rendered eight-track cartridges obsolete. This is true, but not for the reason

you imply. Eight-tracks vanished because they were continuous-loop cartridges and recording devices for eight tracks were rare.

Donald Rosen  
Milwaukee, Wisc.

### Slipped Disc

I was quite surprised to read in the September issue of VIDEO that JVC is planning to market VHD videodisc players in the U.S. It seems to me that some people in the industry are not putting two and two together. Consider: CED is dead, a debacle. LaserVision has several things going for it: the picture is better (compared to tapes), the sound is better, the hardware is reasonably priced, and the software is significantly cheaper than prerecorded tapes. Despite this, the players don't sell very well compared to VCRs.

Obvious, you say—people want to be able to record. However, in the same issue Roger Ebert cites a survey showing that two-thirds of VCR owners use them only for playing cassettes—and I have read that another survey revealed that over half of all tapes recorded by owners are never viewed even once, indicating further indifference to recording capability.

To a degree the dominance of cassettes in the video market is due to greater public awareness, but I think it really boils down to the fact that there are no X-rated features on disc. This is where the software market lies. People have to have software to match their hardware. (Remember, I'm referring to the general public, not videophiles or gadget freaks.) Hence, I think JVC is making

a serious mistake. The Korean companies referred to by Ebert who are planning to sell playback-only machines are on the right track. If these could be part of an add-on or set-up system that also has a recorder (something in the manner of present-day portables), the track could be fast indeed.

Incidentally, I was interested to see the debate in "Feedback" concerning VIDEO's having advertisements for adult movies. I slipped through several video-oriented magazines at a newsstand before buying VIDEO. It looked like a good magazine (and it is) but I bought it *because* it had ads for X-rated films.

Steve Norton  
Jacksonville, Fla.

### Where's Alfred?

In the September 1985 "Feedback" Anthony Marinelli denies that Alfred Hitchcock makes his customary cameo appearance in the film *Rebecca*. On the contrary, Mr. Hitchcock does appear in the film. Cropping of the film frame from the pre-Cinemascope days, when the standard ratio was 1.33:1, takes its toll. So does the framing-down effect of an over-enlarged and masked-in television picture. But if you will be alert and observe closely you will glimpse the Master about three to four minutes into the film.

Mrs. Van Hopper is sitting in the hotel in Monte Carlo with her young companion, sipping her stone-cold coffee as Hitchcock walks briskly across the near background.

As usual, his stance, posture, bearing, and gait are unmistakable. In all fairness, though, this cameo appearance is much easier to spot in a theater with an old-fashioned 3:4 screen ratio capability.

Dean Leon Towle  
Camarillo, Calif.

### Duck Tape

John Walker's review of Disney's *Limited Edition Gold II Cartoon Classics* was especially well done, precise, clear, and objective. I'm puzzled, however, that John pinpointed the title "Tea for Two-Hundred" and its beeless cast but failed to mention an obvious labelling error. Specifically, in the volume entitled "Donald's Bee Pictures," the cartoon "Tea for Two-Hundred" has been substituted for "Bee at the Beach," although the latter title is clearly shown on the tape storage case.

Courtney R. Shirley  
Germantown, Tenn.

### Error

Three recent stories erroneously attributed the manufacture of Canon products to Matsushita. "Camera Buyer's Guide" and "Camcorders & 8mm" (VIDEO, July 1985) stated that components in the Canon VC-200 and Canovision 8 were made by Matsushita. These products are designed and manufactured entirely by Canon. A correction appeared in "Feedback," Sept. 1985. Due to an editorial oversight, the error was repeated regarding Canon's 8mm camcorder in that issue's "What's New." We apologize for the errors and their repetition.



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### Festival Seating

I have just read Roger Ebert's article in your September issue, and he mentions a video rental organization called Home Film Festival, which has a large selection of art, foreign and classic films. Living in a small place like Charleston, S.C., not only do we not get these movies at the cinema but the various video stores do not stock them either. Understandably they cater to the general public, who seem to like *Porky's* and *Police Academy* type of films. Can you possibly publish the address of Home Film Festival?

C.S. Quinlan  
Isle of Palms, S.C.

*The address of Home Film Festival is 305 Linden St., Scranton, Pa. 18503. You can call them at 1-800-258-3456. (Pennsylvania residents should call 1-800-633-3456.)*

### Lemon Pledge

Being a Kingston Trio fan since I was a kid, I was ecstatic to find they were going to be simulcast on Washington D.C. channel 26 (PBS) and WETA-FM. Unfortunately I didn't know it was pledge week. I carefully tuned in all my equipment and at 10 p.m. I sat with remote control ready to record it. After 20 minutes of pledges it finally came on. I figured the wait was worth it—the show was fantastic. Then after 20 minutes of the concert they stopped again for pledges. To say that I was upset is putting it mildly. I shut everything off, re-wound the tape, and went to bed.

Richard A. Mattier  
Owings Mills, Md.

I was thrilled when I discovered that SCTV was returning to broadcast television in New York, via reruns on PBS Channel 13. Unfortunately, my enjoyment of the show was ruined by frequent pledge drive breaks, hosted by a smug Yuppie and an infantile local stand-up comic. After *half a dozen* interruptions in one hour I was ready to reenact the SCTV opening by chucking my set out the window. I know that public television owes its existence to viewer contributions, but is it too much to ask for them to restrict their pledge breaks to before and after a program?

Bill Dahill  
New York, N.Y.

### Satellite of Love

In response to Jim Fronk's letter ("Feedback," September 1985), he and others sharing his views on home TVRO owners are way off base. Speaking for myself (and probably tens of thousands of others), ripping off the cable companies was *not* the reason for buying an earth station system. Poor or impossible reception was my reason and I went to

great trouble and expense to receive a crisp, clear picture my eyes could stand to watch.

The truth is that cable companies are losing subscribers and, along with the subscribers, millions of dollars. Who better to help them out of a bind than home TVRO owners? After all, it won't cost a penny to run miles of lines to all those out-of-the-way homes, and look at all the millions they save in maintenance and service calls. Just sell us a little box and charge a monthly fee for services I feel have very little worth anyway. It's a market they could never have explored without dishes being sold to the public. Now we're "ripping them off," "stealing signals" they're bombarding us with, and being called all kinds of names ("pirates" seems to be the most popular).

All the bills in Congress are doing is making sure that decoders are available to dish owners before services are scrambled, and that a fair and reasonable fee is assessed the people who have spent their hard-earned money to have the chance to receive programming that cable-ready areas take for granted. Just let me watch a clear picture for a change—I don't care if it's only the big three networks. That's more than I used to get! And don't call me a "pirate" because I invested a few thousand dollars so you could charge me for a service you never would have made available if not for my investment.

Richard A. Stays  
Gore, Va.

### Artful Roger

While I am sure that Roger Ebert ("At the Movies...At Home," September 1985) is a very nice man who means well, I must take strong exception to several statements found in the opening paragraphs of his otherwise excellent piece. I consider them an insult to the American television viewers who have—as demonstrated by the VCR/video explosion that makes your magazine possible—considerably more intelligence than Mr. Ebert chooses to acknowledge.

He says: "Television is just not a first-class way to watch movies," which suggests that those of us who prefer this medium lack the ability to judge the merits of a movie because we are not "in a large darkened room with a giant screen at one end of it and strangers all around." He reasons that "the strangers are especially important because they set up a democracy in the dark; their mass response to the movie making it easier for us to join in the communal experience, to enter into the film-going reverie and shut down our *awareness of self*" (my italics).

In other words, we are incapable idiots unable to decide for ourselves what is funny—until we hear a roar of laughter coming from a fat man with a mouth

full of popcorn seated in the fifth row center (or, when a scene is sad, unless we hear the sobbing of a strange lady a couple of seats to our left). We also can't decide whether we should buy a ticket in the first place until first checking out the critic's reviews of same.

Please don't misinterpret my meaning. I do not hate critics. I believe that qualified critics serve an essential purpose in our society in guiding those poor souls who are not capable of deciding what is good, bad, or in-between and who need and welcome such assistance. However, any critic (sorry, Mr. Ebert, but the shoe fits) capable of penning such a non-sequitur as, "the greatness of a film has nothing to do with the importance of its message," has either never studied dramaturgy or chooses to ignore same.

Donn Hecht  
Homestead, Fla.

### The Killer Inside Me

Would you permit a Brian De Palma critic and admirer a few cavils regarding Harvey Elliott's review of *Body Double* (September 1985)? Elliott claims De Palma is a "problematic filmmaker at best" but never defines his terms. He alludes to De Palma's Hitchcockian citations in *Body Double*, which are not "flaunt(ed)" as Elliott claims but are so well done (as in the virtually dialogue-free pursuit sequence in the middle of the film) that they not only best the Master but leave him far behind in De Palma's wake.

As for what Elliott describes as the "driller killing": contrary to Elliott's assertion, "the leading lady's guts" are hardly "open(ed) onscreen." Indeed, the majority of the effect of this truly disturbing sequence is achieved through suggestion. Having shocked Elliott with this scene, De Palma also seems to have fired the critic's imagination. A laudable effect, certainly, but it's unfair to *Body Double* to claim it contains images that just aren't there. Blood coming through the ceiling, yes (even the tasteful Roman Polanski film *Tess* gave us that). But eviscerated intestines? Hardly.

Michael Bliss  
Minneapolis, Minn.

### Errata

"What's New" (VIDEO, Sept. 1985) incorrectly noted that the RCA CL025 camera lacks autofocus and that Marantz's VR250 and VR450 VCRs are not equipped with MTS decoders. The features are present. We regret the omission.

VIDEO welcomes your comments and questions. Due to the volume of mail received, however, it is not possible to send personal replies; please do not include self-addressed envelopes with letters. All letters published may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to: **Feedback, VIDEO Magazine, 460 West 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001.**



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# **THIS IS MAGNAVOX**

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# People

## Idol Chatter

by **Lorenzo Carcaterra**



Light my fire: **Ally Sheedy**, the brains and the beauty of *St. Elmo's Fire* (on video this month) credits fellow actor **Sean** (*The Falcon and the Snowman*)

**Penn** for giving a healthy boost to her young, seven-film career. "We worked together on *Bad Boys*" (available on video), the 23-year-old actress says.

"He was the first actor I ever worked with who was my own age. He was so focused, so concentrated, so disciplined. Sean always worked on his

script, using his time well. I incorporated some of that. It helped make me a better actress and it led to better roles." These days Mr. Penn is tutoring wife **Madonna**.

She has more million-selling hit singles than any other female recording artist. From 1967's *Respect to Baby, I Love You, Chain of Fools*, and *A Natural Woman*, **Aretha Franklin** has set some standards. This year she's exploded and, thanks in part to one very hot video ("Freeway of Love"), she's reaching a popularity high she's never known. "I love what's happening with the album and with my video," she says. "I feel like this is my 'new wave' of hits. These past 20 years have been just a warmup. I'm making my move now."

*A View to a Kill* is **Roger Moore's** seventh crack at Agent 007, James Bond. If both the actor and the producers of the action series are to be believed, it will also be his last. "I won't do any-

more," the 57-year-old Moore says. "That's always my answer. Then, if they don't ask me back, I'm not going to be embarrassed." *A View to a Kill* is doing a brisk fall video business, far better than any other Moore/Bond since 1972's *Live and Let Die*. "James Bond doesn't sweat," Moore says, attempting to explain the current surge in Bondmania.


"He must change his shirts 15 times a day. When other people are putting on a bathing suit, he's putting on a tuxedo. And of course there are the women. They are marvelous—aren't they?" Yes.

People hardly noticed *A Flash of Green* when it opened this summer. That's because critics panned it and theaters didn't bother booking it. Now it's out on video and (trust me) it's worth a rental. **Ed Harris** (*The Right Stuff, Alamo Bay*) stars as **John D. MacDonald's** hard-edged reporter out to land his big story. Harris, who once dangled himself 10 stories out a university window, cold sober, spent one afternoon in front of the cameras hitting, gagging, and stuffing his father in the trunk of a car. Relax. His father's an actor. "Besides," Harris explains, "you don't really hit people in the movies. They have ways of doing that."

**Tom Hanks** built a strong following with *Splash* (on video), but he almost loses it with *The Man With One Red Shoe* (on video, for what that's worth). *Volunteers* (with fellow-*Splashman* **John Candy**) will win them back when it hits video racks later in the month. All in all, a two-out-of-three dice roll of a film career. "I don't have the

slightest idea as to why I'm successful," Hanks admits. "Nobody really knows whether a film will do well or not. Even if it looks good, it could end up playing the airline circuit three weeks after its release. The success of any movie is an absolute crapshoot. The bottom line is: if they don't laugh, I'm in big trouble."

**Billy Joel's** "You're Only Human" video, which tackles the real and present danger of teenage suicide, has become must-viewing for many of the country's high schools. Requests have filtered in from such diverse towns as Plano, Texas (11 teen suicides in 1984) and New York's Westchester County (16 deaths in '83-'84). The video, a ripoff of **Frank Capra's** *It's A Wonderful Life*, is also expected to be Joel's launching step to a feature film career.

Video outlets are being overrun with requests for *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, last year's hit PBS Mystery series which has returned this fall for a second season. **Jeremy Brett** stars as the most accurate Sherlock ever seen. "I have to be good," the English stage actor confessed to VIDEO. "Holmes fans watch things very carefully. Now that we're on video they can rewind and fast forward and do other monstrous things in order to catch me in a fatal error. But they won't. At least I don't think so." There is one major mistake, but you won't get it from us—rent the video and figure it out yourself. 

Drew Friedman



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# New Products



*Proton 619A monitor/receiver*

## Proton's 19-Inch Monitor Is in Third Generation

Dubbed part of its third generation of monitors/receivers, Proton's 619A features advanced video circuitry for bringing in quality images and stereo sound. Among its many capabilities, the 19-inch set has 139 cable-ready channels, an infrared remote control, and an MTS stereo and SAP decoder.

To deliver a high-quality picture the 619A uses a "video noise-reduction system" to cut down on "ringing" in low-brightness pictures. Proton says the picture tube will provide 15 percent more of the original signal than conventional TVs because the 619A's overscan is limited to 5 percent.

Proton says the set delivers a picture with a horizontal resolution of over 370 lines and a video bandwidth of 4.7 MHz. The monitor has two RF inputs, two composite video inputs, and two sets of audio inputs/outputs.

Price: \$850.

*For additional information,  
circle No. 135 on Reader Service Card.*

## Emerson Introduces 25-Inch MTS TV

Emerson has introduced a 25-inch stereo color TV complete with a



*RCA CGA010 Character Generator*

## RCA Character Generator Has Special Effects

RCA's new character generator, model CGA010, features special-effect wipes including a curtain-and-window effect. It can also display a stopwatch calendar and time lapse.

With a 60-character limit per scene, the titler can store up to 20 groups of frequently used characters to be recalled to the screen with a scrolling effect. Also, 40 common words can be stored in the word register. The character generator runs on two AA batteries (included). Measuring 8 by 3-1/4 by 1 inch, the unit can be carried into the field using its built-in belt clip.

Price: \$249.95.

*For additional information,  
circle No. 137 on Reader Service Card.*

## Sony Upgrades Watchman TV

Billed as its smallest model ever, Sony has introduced its new Watchman FD-2A. Sony says the pocket-sized black & white TV is 20 percent lighter and almost 15 percent smaller than its previous model, the FD-20A.

The 2-inch flat picture tube has a tilted, recessed screen to cut down on glare. The set delivers a high-contrast



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## For people who take their fun seriously.

Janey's (Sarah Jessica Parker of "Footloose") wildest dream is to become a dancer on "DTV," the hottest dance TV show there is.

The nuns at her school are against it. Her father, the Colonel, is too. But Janey teams up with her best friend, Lynne (Helen Hunt of "St. Elsewhere") and they triumph against all odds, including some nifty, as well as shifty, competitors.

As the finger poppin', show stoppin' music and dance numbers build, Janey's slickest moves are getting around her competitors, getting around the dance floor, and giving it all she's got.

So put up your feet, and enjoy. Or dance along, because when girls just want to have fun, everyone else does, too.

Getting into trouble is easy but getting out of it is all the fun!



### *Girls* JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN THE MOVIE

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LEE MONTGOMERY (PETE 'N' TILLIE)  
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**GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN**

"...an original, delightful exuberant romp"—LA Times



NEW WORLD VIDEO

Now on videocassette.

## New Products

image on all UHF and VHF channels. A 1-1/8-inch samarium cobalt speaker and an earphone jack are built-in. Using the set in its sound-only mode extends the battery life about seven times.

The Watchman delivers 1-1/2 hours of viewing with four supplied regular "AA" batteries. Alkaline batteries should provide about five hours. It can also be powered by optional adapters, including an AC-129WA adapter, a DCC-127A car battery adapter, or an EBP-6 auxiliary battery case for extended outdoor use.



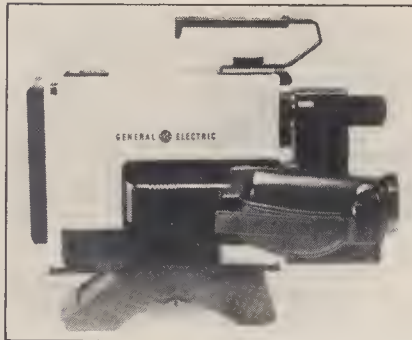
Other optional equipment includes a VCV-2 screen magnifier, a VCA-3W gutter-mounted car antenna, an EAC-50 antenna adaptor cord, a MDR-E152 ear receiver, and a VCA-4 roof-mounted car antenna.

The 2-5/8 inch wide by 6-1/4 inch high

by 1-11/16 inch deep set weighs in at 14-1/2 ounces with batteries. The FD-2A is available in charcoal gray, blue, or pearl white and comes with a carrying case and handstrap.

Price: \$179.95

For additional information,  
circle No. 138 on Reader Service Card.



### GE's Camcorder Shoots For Over Two Hours

GE's 1CVM6060 VHS Camcorder has all the standard options. Weighing in at seven pounds, the unit can record for two hours and 40 minutes. Special effects include video search and still frame. Auto focus, auto iris (both with manual override), and auto white balance make for an easy-to-use machine.

The power zoom has a macro-focus feature, and the camcorder can generate

characters for the date and time of shooting. Twenty-lux low-light sensitivity and 270 lines of resolution ensure quality images. The camcorder comes with a shoulder strap, carrying case, battery charger, and one two-hour battery.

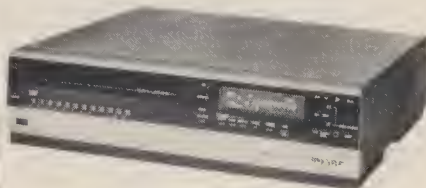
Price: \$1,999.

For additional information,  
circle No. 139 on Reader Service Card.

### Sharp's New VCRs Controlled by Chip

Sharp has two new VHS VCRs that are controlled by microchips. The VC-584U and VC-585U feature 14-day/3-event timers, a 12-function wireless remote, front loading, and a built-in dew sensor. The search function is five times faster than normal play. The VC-585U has the added feature of a four-head drive.

Price: VC-584U, \$539.95; VC-585U, \$599.95.



For additional information,  
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\*Stereo TV sound where available. TV picture simulated.  
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ROMANCING THE STONE	0894092	THUNDERBALL	0709042	FUNNY GIRL	1511002	ARTHUR	6024092
THE BIG CHILL	1527022	STARMAN	1723042	STAR WARS	0564162	M*A*S*H	0055122
COUNTRY	5341072	ALL ABOUT EVE	0044082	THE RIGHT STUFF	6043062	THE SURE THING	3136012
HOLIDAY INN	1035072	THE GRADUATE	3103002	CASABLANCA	0507162	CHRISTINE	1580062
THE MALTESE FALCON	0508072	JOHNNY DANGEROUSLY	0980042	CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND	1510192	PURPLE RAIN	6048012
THE SOUND OF MUSIC	0039212	THE ALAMO	0583052	A SOLDIER'S STORY	1733022	NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VACATION	6039022
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RED DAWN	2591012	A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET	3288072	CADDYSHACK	6023002	COTTON CLUB	3100032
ROBIN HOOD (Disney)	5299092	MICKI & MAUDE	1732032	POLICE ACADEMY	6049002	MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS	2529082
STRIPES	1513162	BACHELOR PARTY	0926012	AGAINST ALL ODDS	1633032	MAKING MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER	7103922
CRUISING	3500232	BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID	0517302	THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	0576042	OCTOPUSSY	0856052
FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE	0690052	THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING	0948052	FORT APACHE	5526042	THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	0910092
CAPTAIN BLOOD	0686192	BALL OF FIRE	3139082	YENTL	0895082	DUMBO (Disney)	5251052
CLEOPATRA (Taylor & Burton)	0579012	GOLOFINGER	0539002	CAT BALLOU	1545002	SPLASH	5304022
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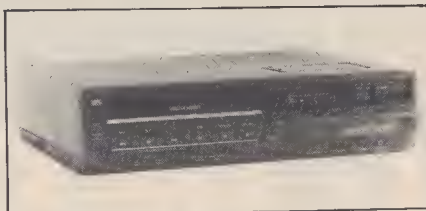
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## New Products

### Vector Debuts Stereo VCR

Vector, an audio component manufacturer, has introduced its second VCR this year. The V-3000 features a stereo tuner with MTS and bilingual capability. The unit is equipped with a 4-event/21-day timer and a 105-channel cable-ready tuner. The V-3000 includes a 12-function wireless remote control.

Like its first model, the V-2000, the V-3000 has a nifty 45-degree-angled mirror to give a full view of the lighted cassette compartment. Tapes can be played



or recorded at SP, LP, and EP modes. Price: \$499.

For additional information, circle No. 143 on Reader Service Card.

### Bush Houses VCRs In Dark Oak

Bush Industries builds homes for VCRs, TVs, and tape libraries—dark oak cabinets with rounded edges constructed of oak solids or veneers.

The four new dark oak cabinets give you a choice: you can have the TV enclosed by or on top of the cabinet. The OC 1436 which measures 43-5/8 by 29 by 16-7/8 inches in height, width and depth, fits most 19-inch sets in its upper compartment, and provides two shelves, protected by tempered glass doors, for VCR and tapes. The upper shelf slides out for access to the VCR.

The OC1431 offers the same bottom, which you can plop your set comfortably atop. If you need something that moves, the OC1421 is a television cart that rolls

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New Video's buying department searches through over 150 different sources looking for movies worth owning. Each month hundreds of movies are released. Quite frankly, most of these videocassettes are, to put it nicely, junk. But through it all, our staff of movie lovers has come up with the most interesting selection you'll ever want to see. Sure, many of them never won an Oscar—but they caught our

attention and we think they'll catch yours. New Video is known (and, this is not an overstatement) throughout the world as "the Source" for foreign films, cult movies, and hard-to-find classics. If it's on video and worth seeing, you'll find it here. Period.

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Our catalogue costs \$3.50. Some of our competitors offer theirs for free. Others charge more. But the truth is, there is no comparison. If you enjoy video, you'll enjoy it more with our "one-of-a-kind" catalogue. Use the form below and order your catalogue today. If you do not agree that this is, by far, the most interesting \$3.50 investment you've ever made—write us for a prompt, courteous refund. You have sixty-days to make up your mind—it may take you that long to go through all the reviews!

New Video's retail stores have been rated as one of the top twelve in America. When you visit New York, visit New Video.

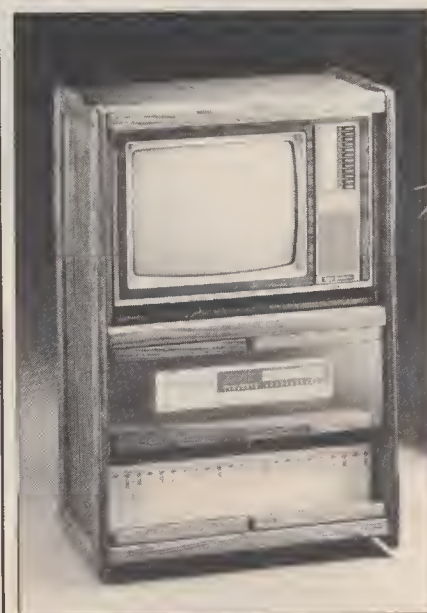


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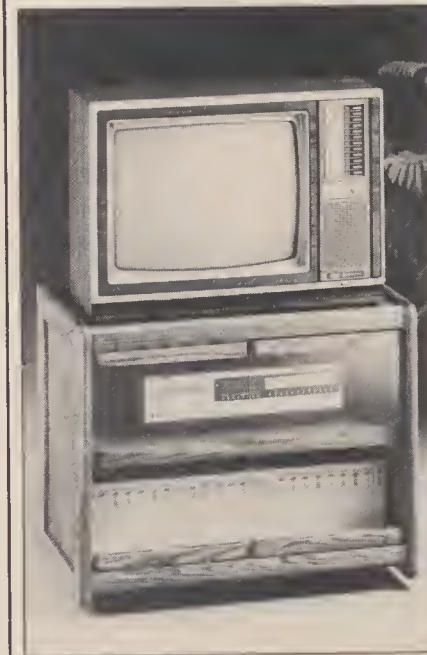
Send \$3.50 in check, m.o. or cash to: New Video (Dept. VM-1), 276 Third Ave, N.Y.C. 10010

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FELINE FURY

PARIS  
BY NIGHT

BAYOU  
BEAUTY  
PLAYMATE  
DEVIN DEVASQUEZ

COMEDY  
GALORE

PLAYMATE OF  
THE YEAR  
KAREN  
VELEZ

MORE  
MADONNA  
EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS

PLAYMATE  
CALENDAR  
OFFER

SEE SHOW  
FOR DETAILS

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Interview  
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Video Playmate . . .  
Devin De Vasquez  
Ribald Classic . . . "The Doll"  
Playmate Of The Year . . .  
Karen Velez

### PLUS:

Playmate Photo Session  
A Century of Pin-Ups

### AND:

Jo Collins . . . Playmate in  
Vietnam Remembers  
Video Viewer Bonus . . . 1986  
Playmate Calendar Special  
Offer . . . Details on Program  
AND MORE . . .

Program Length: 90 Minutes  
Suggested Retail Price: \$39.95



# VDO-PAK®

THE POWER AND  
LIGHTING SPECIALISTS  
FOR THE LONG RUN



**LIGHT  
YOUR  
WAY**

WITH THE COMPLETE  
LINE OF PRO-QUALITY  
ACCESSORIES FOR  
YOUR PORTABLE



## VDO-LITE VIDEO LIGHTING SYSTEM

**NI-PAK**  
Ni-Cd pack  
**POWER BELTS**  
From 6 to 20 AH  
**CAR CORDS**  
**AND MUCH MORE!**

**- WE'VE GOT YOUR BATTERY -**

With the broadest line of belts, packs and lights available VDO-PAK has the right combination for YOU! Call us for all the information and the location of your local VDO-PAK dealer.

**(24 HR.) TOLL FREE!**

**VDO-PAK PRODUCTS**  
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**U.S.A. 800-874-5906**  
**FLORIDA 800-342-4900**

VDO-PAK and NI-PAK are trademarks of  
Stanley-Jackson Corporation

For additional information, circle No. 15 on Reader Service Card.

## New Products

on brass casters. It also offers a lower shelf for ancient issues of *TV Guide* and *The Dial*. Bush also makes an audio cabinet to match these vid cabs. The OC1461 puts your stereo behind glass on three adjustable shelves. It measures 43-5/8 x 20-7/8 x 16-7/8 inches (h/w/d).

Prices: OC1436, \$299.95; OC1431, \$219.95; OC1421, \$119.95; OC1461, \$279.95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 144 on Reader Service Card.



## Tic-Tracer Tracks Hot Wires

Think you have a live wire on your hands? You needn't touch it to find out with the hand-held Tic-Tracer from Lou-is and Beech. The instrument emits a buzz as you move it towards a hot wire. You can use it to locate bad connections or improper grounding, locate hidden wiring, check fuses and breakers, and reveal proper polarity. Measuring 8-1/2 by 2-3/4 by 1 inches, the Tic-Tracer operates on two AA batteries.

Price: \$39.95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 145 on Reader Service Card.

## Platt Carrying Cases Protect Equipment

Platt Luggage has designed hard shell carrying cases to protect cameras, VCRs, power packs, and other valuable equipment against the bumps and bruises of the road. Or rather, it lets buyers design the cases to custom fit them to their own gear.

The Platt "make your own" cases come with sections of pre-cut foam padding in various shapes and sizes. Buyers may choose the pieces that wrap their equipment the most snugly to tailor the interior to their gear. The shells of the cases are made of rugged ABS thermo-



plastic, with extruded aluminum rims to withstand abuse. The cases suited for VCRs come in three sizes: 1705-V, 17 x 12 x 5 inches (h/w/d); 2007-V, 20 x 14 x 7 inches; and 2207-V, 22 x 16 x 7 inches.

Prices: 1705-V, \$70; 2207-V, \$95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 146 on Reader Service Card.

## Universal Converts Old Sets to Remote Control

Have you been kicking yourself lately for not spending the extra money it would have cost to buy a TV that included a remote control? Don't turn in your old set too hastily: the Universal V-1000 Remote Control works with any TV. The wireless infrared device controls power and selection for 60 channels. The remote works from 20 feet away, has fine tuning for VHF, and a six-channel memory.

The unit will also make your set cable ready by converting the UHF band to accommodate cable transmissions. The V-1000 operates on a standard 9 volt battery, is UL and FCC approved, and comes with a 90 day limited warranty.

Price: \$99.



For additional information,  
circle No. 147 on Reader Service Card.

## Surge Protection From Phillips

Phillips ECG Inc. has added a three-outlet surge protector to its line of voltage protectors. The EMF-33 accommodates three-pronged plugs for an AC outlet to protect against high voltage spikes and RF noise. The device has an LED indicator that lights up when area surge and noise circuits are operating.

Price: \$14.90.

For additional information,  
circle No. 148 on Reader Service Card.





## FORTUNATELY, OUR NEW VIDEO TAPE WON'T CAPTURE ALL LIFE'S SPECIAL MOMENTS.

Outdoors, even life's most innocent little episodes can turn portable video recording into portable video disaster. It's just *those* special moments that new Memorex® Pro Cam video cassettes are designed to protect you against.

To help stand up to outdoor heat, cold and humidity, we make Pro Cam with a thicker base film that's 30% stiffer than our standard video tape.

To help prevent dropouts caused by static charges on the tape that attract dust and dirt, we've built Pro Cam with an exclusive anti-stat cassette mechanism.

But Pro Cam's crowning achievement is something you'd never expect from a video cassette—extended battery life. Our exclusive anti-stat mechanism helps the cassette run more freely, reducing strain on the motor and drain on the batteries—giving them longer life.

Of course, a video cassette this good deserves the extra protection of our new plastic Safeguard™ Storage Case. By fully enclosing the cassette, it's the ideal way to keep your recordings safe and secure.

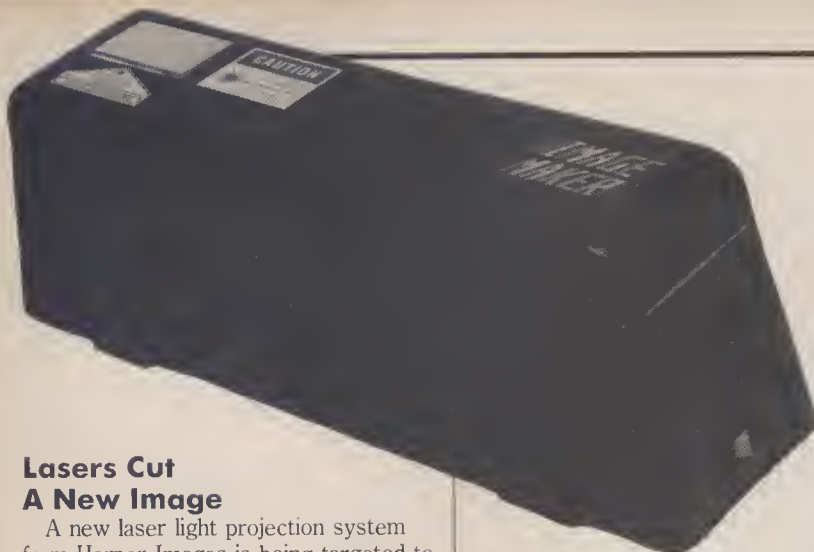
With Pro Cam, you'll only bring home those special moments you want to save.

## IS IT LIVE OR IS IT MEMOREX®

For additional information, circle No. 16 on Reader Service Card.



© 1985 Memtek Products



### Lasers Cut A New Image

A new laser light projection system from Harper Images is being targeted to the home market. The Imagemaker projects two helium-neon beams that form red abstract images on a wall, ceiling, or screen. The geometric designs can be enlarged from half an inch to 15 feet in diameter.

The constantly changing images respond to the beat of the music by way of the headphone jack. Each beam is independently driven by each stereo channel. The 7-1/2 pound unit has a lifetime of 14,000 hours. The laser wavelength measures in at 6328 angstroms. Not to worry about it cutting through the ceiling—the power output is only .95mW.

Price: \$1095.

For additional information,  
circle No. 152 on Reader Service Card.

### Osram's Video Light Has Rechargeable Battery Pack

Osram's hand held AL-100 video light comes with a compact battery recharger. The battery lasts 10 minutes, and an LED monitor tells you when it's time to plug the pack into a conventional wall outlet for recharging. The 4-1/2 pound unit uses a 75-watt 12-volt tungsten-halogen lamp that generates 4,500 candellas in spot lighting and 1,500 candellas at the wide angle setting. The light can also be mounted on the camera or a tri-

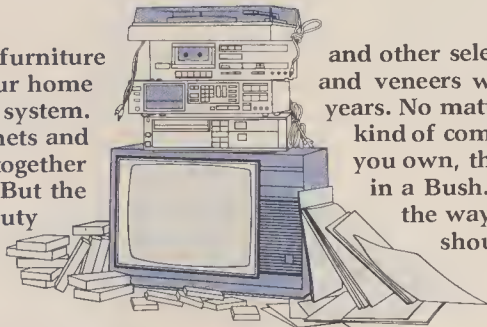
pod, or the power pack can be used as a stand.

Price: \$179.95



For additional information,  
circle No. 153 on Reader Service Card.

Bush makes furniture  
that fits your home  
entertainment system.  
Modular cabinets and  
stands that go together  
in minutes. But the  
styling and beauty  
of solid oak



and other selected woods  
and veneers will last for  
years. No matter what  
kind of components  
you own, they belong  
in a Bush. This is  
the way sound  
should look.

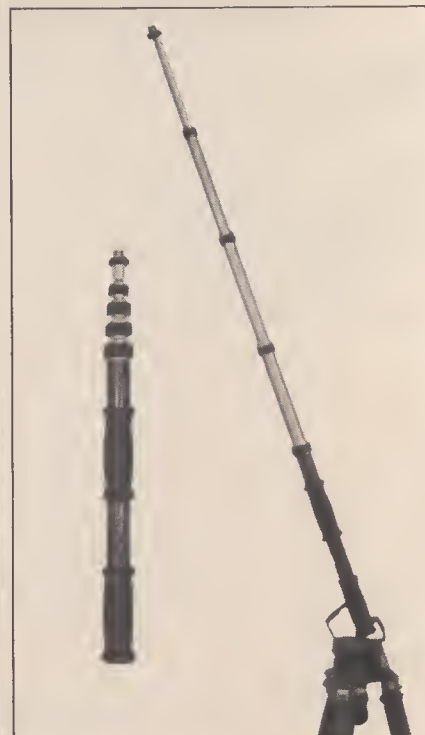
## WOULDN'T IT ALL LOOK BETTER IN A BUSH?



Bush Industries, Inc., 312 Fair Oak Street, Little Valley, New York 14755, 1-800-228-BUSH, In New York 1-800-248-BUSH

### Gitzo Mic Fishpole Catches the Big Sound

Are your videotapes foiled because you can't get the mic where you want it? Gitzo says put it on a fishpole—specifically a 564LM Microphone Fishpole. The 564LM consists of five sections which telescope to 7 feet and collapse to 1-1/2 feet.







## Give the best of Disney for \$29.95.

This holiday, give the splendor of *Mary Poppins*. The magic of the one and only *Pinocchio*. And the wonder of *Dumbo*. Give the joy of a Disney Home Video cassette.

Choose from 21 Disney treasures, now just \$29.95 each. Ride with *Robin Hood*. Share the heart-warming tale of *Old Yeller*. Or enter the futuristic world of *Tron*.

**Disney's \$9.95 bonus cassette.**



And as our holiday gift to you, buy any Disney title and get our never-before-released Comedy & Magic Revue for just \$9.95.

But hurry. At these low prices, Disney is flying out of the stores.

**WALT DISNEY HOME VIDEO**

*Making your dreams come true.*

\*Suggested retail price. Limited time only.  
Walt Disney Home Video distributed by Walt Disney Telecommunications and Non-Theatrical Co., Burbank, California 91521

For additional information, circle No. 18 on Reader Service Card.

©1985 Walt Disney Productions

# D I G I T A L

## RCA'S DIGITAL COMMAND COMPONENT SYSTEMS DELIVER A SUPERIOR SIGHT AND SOUND EXPERIENCE. NO MATTER HOW YOU STACK THEM.

With the advent of Stereo TV, Music Videos, Stereo Simulcasts, and Hi-Fi VCRs—TV just isn't what it used to be. It's much, much more. Hence the reasoning behind RCA's revolutionary Digital Command Systems, multiple component systems that marry audio and video together for a superior viewing experience.

RCA offers a variety of systems. From a basic 25 Inch Monitor/VCR/Receiver/Speaker system starting at \$1,995, up to a sophisticated 7 component system with 26 Inch Monitor for \$3,495.\*



### THIS SINGLE REMOTE RUNS THE WHOLE SHOW.

Unlike many other systems, RCA's Digital Command Systems are all operated by a single remote control. Whether you go in for a basic system or a more advanced system, RCA's Digital Command

remote lets you run the whole show from across the room.

### SAVE UP TO \$200 WITH INTRODUCTORY REBATES INCLUDING A FREE VIDEO MONITOR BASE.

Find out how you can save up to \$200 on a Digital Command Component System by visiting your RCA dealer. Or call 1-800-32VIDEO and ask for the RCA Systems Operator.



TECHNOLOGY THAT EXCITES THE SENSES.

\*suggested dealer's price. Retail prices may vary.



# C O M P O N E N T



C O M M A N D



T S Y S T E M S

For additional information circle No. 19 on Reader Service Card

## New Products

The extensions lock on waterproof nylon sleeves, and two holes at the bottom and in the last section provide for the microphone cord. The tip is adjustable for different microphones. The Gitzo fishpole is warranted for five years.

Price: \$109.95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 149 on Reader Service Card.

## Rhoades Amplifier Simulates Stereo

Rhoades' new stereo amplifier has a built-in synthesizer for simulated stereo sound. The TA-450 hooks up a TV, VCR, or satellite receiver with a pair of stereo speakers.

If the TV signal is mono, as is usually the case, the TA-450 splits the signal and constructs it into what Rhoades has dubbed "stereoplex." The amplifier includes EQX noise reduction, bass boost, balance, and volume controls.

Price: \$129.



For additional information,  
circle No. 150 on Reader Service Card.



## Discwasher Introduces Starter Kit

For first-time VCR owners who also have cable TV, Discwasher has come out with a Video Starter Kit. The Kit comes with many accessories previously available and is packaged with an illustrated instruction manual. Included is all the equipment you need to retain the programming capability of your VCR while using a cable converter box, which usually allows access to only one channel at a time.

The kit includes the company's Video Head Cleaner, an A-B switch, signal splitter, and three coaxial RF cables (two 1-meter and one 2-meter). The

manual has easy to understand directions and schematics showing how to hook up the equipment. The kit comes in both Beta and VHS versions.

Price: \$29.95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 151 on Reader Service Card

## Videolog Tracks Taped Programs

The Videolog index card filer allows you to keep track of what program is on which tape. The index cards are set up alphabetically according to the program you've recorded or the scene you've shot. A simple notation system allows you to find the tape holding the material and the counter reading showing where

## Two ways to integrate your audio and video components.

There are two ways to integrate your audio and video components — but only one of them will allow you to switch your audio and video signals with no perceptible distortion (<.05% THD) or crosstalk (-90dB separation). And without having to rewire everything each time you want to use a different piece of equipment.

**Build a custom A/V System**

Vidicraft's Audio/Video Switcher can select among any four inputs (cameras, VCRs, stereos, etc.) and send those signals to any or all of four outputs. This way you can combine all of your audio and video components into one integrated system. Or, connect up to four VCRs at one time for

multiple copying.

**Take simulcasts in true stereo**

With the Audio/Video Switcher you can actually take the stereo audio signal from your FM tuner and the video signal from your TV (or cable, or satellite, etc.) and combine them to make a true stereo Hi-Fi recording on your VCR.

You see, at Vidicraft, we feel the only limitation to your home entertainment system should be your own imagination.

# VIDICRAFT

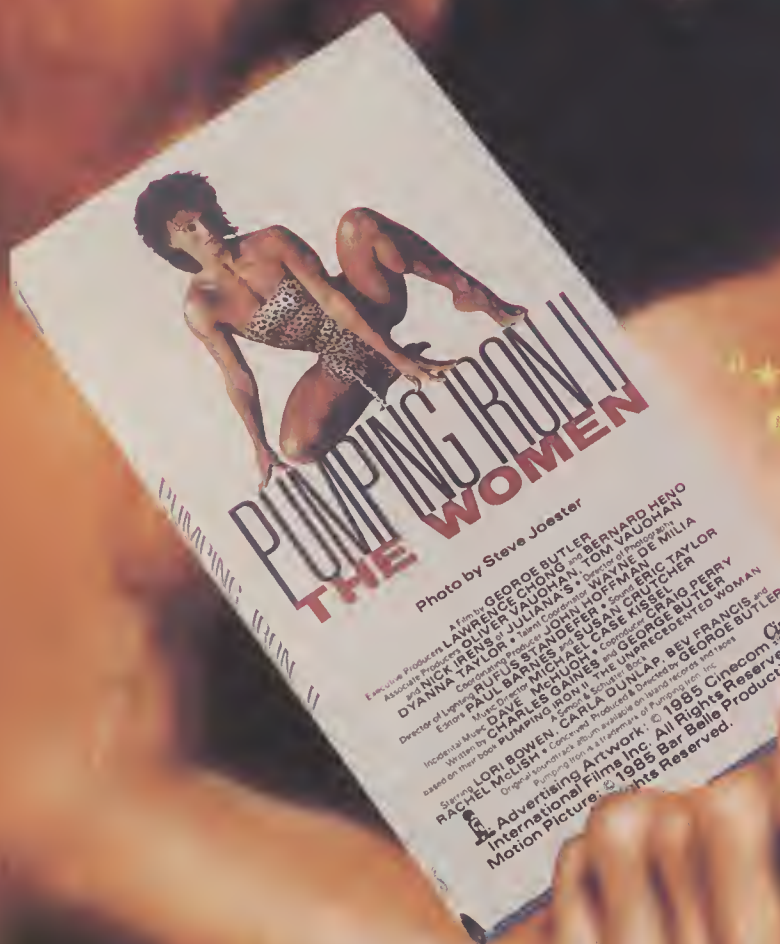
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N. CANADA: CALL 604-754-7000



# NOW POSING IN YOUR VIDEO STORE!



★★★★½. Slick, savvy movie making that hooks you from the start and never lets you go... You're in for a surprise."

*William Wolf, General News Services*

"Very poignant... 'Pumping Iron II' is better and kinder than its popular predecessor."

*—Richard Corliss, Time Magazine*

"Pumping Iron," the film that turned the obscure sport of male bodybuilding into an overnight phenomenon and made Arnold Schwarzenegger a star, broke the ground. Now, experience PUMPING IRON II: THE WOMEN, a film that is changing the way the world views the female physique—creating "a new definition of the female form."

## ON VIDEOCASSETTE AND VIDEODISC



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P.O. Box 4000  
Stamford, CT 06907



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For additional information, circle No. 21 on Reader Service Card

# Where to keep your Christmas memories.

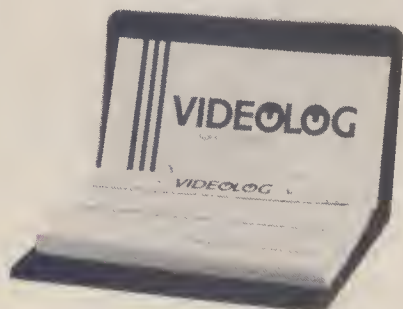
Nothing captures holiday events worth keeping as well as RCA Video Tape. With RCA you get excellence in technology from a proven leader in video. So everything you keep is collector's quality. RCA offers a full line of VHS and Beta tapes...



it starts.

Space is also provided for playing time, speed, recording date, and historical or other information about the tape. The Videolog, marketed by OEM Communications, is about the size of a cassette and can be stored in a standard cassette box. Each index card filer has 100 pages for individual program listings.

Price: \$7.95.



For additional information, circle No. 154 on Reader Service Card.

## Quest for Demodulation

Quest Custom Video has come out with a demodulator aimed at the video enthusiast. The Video Interface takes an NTSC standard channel three signal and produces a composite video and discrete audio signal. This is especially useful in



converting pay cable programming to improve the signal for recording.

The Video Interface uses a SAW (Surface Acoustic Wave) filter, configured for quasi-parallel processing, to split the video and audio signals. Splitting the signals produces a greater bandwidth and



preserves the integrity of the video. The unit measures 1-3/4 inches high by 5-1/4 inches wide by 5-1/2 inches deep.

Price: \$139.95.

For additional information, circle No. 155 on Reader Service Card.

## Olympus Camcorder Easy to Carry

The Olympus VX-402 VHS camcorder weighs in at a light 5.7 lbs. without battery pack or cassette. The new model can record with as little as 10 Lux light for 160 minutes. The unit comes with a rechargeable two-hour battery and has automatic white balance and exposure control. An infrared beam measures the

distance between subject and camera to allow for auto focus. The focus can also be used manually or locked into place.

The VX-402 comes with a 6X power zoom lens with macro focusing capability. Operating details—including date, battery power, white balance adjustment, and light are monitored through the half-inch viewfinder.

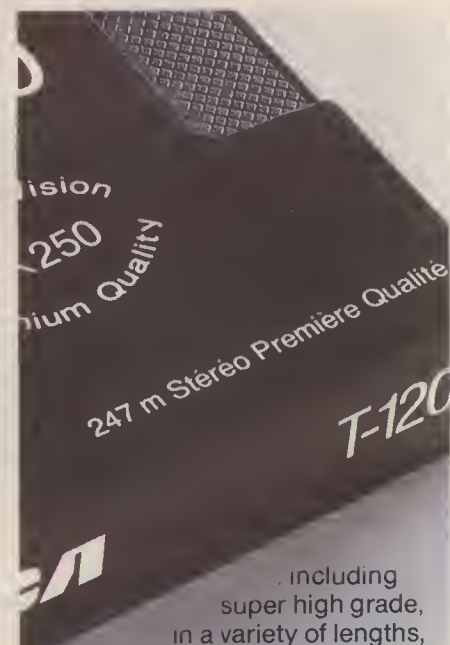
Price: \$1850.



For additional information, circle No. 156 on Reader Service Card.

## Akai Selector Has Tube Built-In

The SS-V20, an audio/video system selector from Akai, has a 4-inch color monitor built-in. Six components can be hooked up using the selector. There are three inputs for VCRs and three for other components such as a videodisc



including super high grade, in a variety of lengths, for pictures that are brighter and clearer than ever.

This holiday, play for keeps with RCA Video Tape.

**RCA** Video Tape  
When you're playing for keeps.





# If a video system isn't worth hearing, it isn't worth seeing.

by Ray Charles

"My word, have you ever seriously *listened* to most video systems? This is not great sound, my friend, this is noise. They may give you something pretty to look at, but they sure make you pay with your ears.

Then one day the Pioneer folks ask me to listen to their videodisc system called LaserDisc. And I'm amazed. The sound on LaserDisc is every bit as good as I ever heard on my stereo.

Maybe better.

I think to myself, 'If the sound is so great, maybe the picture isn't so hot.' So I ask the experts. And they tell me that the picture on LaserDisc is so much better than any other video system, nothing else even comes close.

And then they tell me that because the disc is read by a beam of light instead of a video head or a needle, it can't wear out the way tapes or records do.

Suddenly, it all becomes very clear to me: if you could get the best sound and the best picture from the same system, if you didn't have to give up one to get the other, how could you possibly consider anything else?

I don't care if you're a big video-music fan, or all you do is watch movies. Either way, you're not going to do better than LaserDisc nohow."



Model shown LD-700.

**PIONEER®**  
Video for those  
who really care about audio.

Prices start at \$299. Suggested retail price.

LaserDisc™ brand videodisc player is a trademark of Pioneer Electronics Corp.  
© 1985 Pioneer Video, Inc. All rights reserved.

For additional information, circle No. 23 on Reader Service Card.

The VCR that's capable of recording what will happen next year.



By 1986, most network affiliate stations will broadcast stereo. Unfortunately, most VCRs aren't wired to handle it.

But Toshiba's new M-5800 VHS is. It has stereo capability in both record and play. Plus 4 heads, 4-event/7-day programming and full-function wireless remote.

If you think it sounds good now, you should hear it next year.

In Touch with Tomorrow  
**TOSHIBA**

Toshiba America, Inc., 82 Totowa Road, Wayne, NJ 07470

For additional information, circle No. 24 on Reader Service Card.



**RECOTON 3D PRO FORMULA VCR CLEANERS DO MORE THAN JUST CLEAN HEADS!** They clean the *entire* tape path including video and audio heads, capstan, pinchroller, and tape guides. As the Pro Formula Cleaning Solution gently dissolves residual tape oxide, dust and dirt on contact, Recoton 3D captures these contaminants in a non-abrasive fibernet cleaning material and safely whisks them away. It's as simple as dropping in a cassette and pressing play...

Recoton 3D Cleaners maintain a sparkling VCR picture, while extending both your VCR and Tape Library's life, and helping prevent costly repairs.

Protect your video investment! Ask your dealer for Recoton.

**RECOTON®**

Recoton Corporation, 46-23 Crane St., Long Island City, New York 11101 (718) 392-6442

## New Products

player and TV tuners. The monitor can be used to display one source being recorded or dubbed while watching another.

The SS-V20 also has an EXT processor terminal so that enhancers, color correctors, PCM processors, and graphic equalizers can be added on. Other features include an RF converter and bi-directional dubbing.

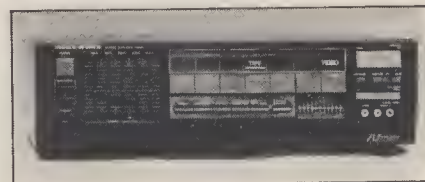
Price: \$649.95.



For additional information,  
circle No. 157 on Reader Service Card.

## Marantz Amplifier Has Video Options

The Marantz PM551 audio/video amplifier has a multiple input capability that turns the unit into a versatile control center for your entertainment system. The amplifier includes connections for three separate video components. Sound injection allows any audio source to be heard on VCR playback. The PM551 features an output of 100 watts



per channel at four or eight ohms. Frequency response is 20 Hz to 20 kHz with a harmonic distortion of only 0.05 per cent.

The wireless remote control has a volume control with two preset memories, audio muting, balance, a spatial stereo image enhancer, and a five-band graphic equalizer with EQ defeat. Other features include dubbing capability, an external processor loop, a VCR mono switch, an audio/video external/internal switch, speaker A/B, A + B switching, a low filter, and a headphone jack.

Price: \$399.95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 158 on Reader Service Card.

## Kiwi Introduces Super Strong Bags

For toting equipment into the field, Kiwi has introduced a line of video bags that uses high-quality material to protect their contents. Each bag is lined with Kiwi's "Cellular Armor," a light, high-density thermoplastic that Kiwi says has the impact strength of steel, but will return to its original shape after being knocked about.

The line also features a "Hide-A-Belt"



# OPERATION C.I.A.-WATCH BURT IN ACTION ON ONE OF HIS FIRST UNDERCOVER ASSIGNMENTS.

It's Burt Reynolds in one of the roles that helped make him a superstar... OPERATION C.I.A.!

There's trouble afoot in Indochina when one of our agents is "liquidated" before he can deliver top secret information vital to national security.

"The Company" sends in C.I.A. operative Burt to unravel the riddle, recover the information and discover who masterminded the plot.

It's rapid fire intrigue and undercover adventure in Vietnam as secret agent Burt does what he's always done best... charming the women while hunting down the villains in this international spy thriller from CBS/FOX.

**CBS  
FOX**  
VIDEO



LORIMAR

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Printed in U.S.A.

For additional information, circle No. 26 on Reader Service Card.

Available Soon  
on videocassette

## New Products

which straps the bag to your waist, leaving your hands free to shoot. When not in use, the Hide-A-Belt can be stored in its own pouch. The exterior fabric is

1000 Denier DePont Cordura nylon. The interior is made of 200 Denier black liner.

The line includes: the Video Camera



Kiwi's new line of shielded Cordura Nylon bags for video equipment including camcorders and camera/recorder combinations. Prices for the totes range from \$12.95 to \$109.95. All of the bags are guaranteed for life.

Holster (VCH-77); the Mini Video Camera Bag (VCR-35); the Camcorder Bag (VCR-66); the Video Camera/Recorder Combo Bag (VCR-201); the Custom-Fit Video Recorder Bag (VR-1176) for Canon, GE, JVC, Matsushita, Nikon, Olympus, Philco, Quasar, and Sylvania VCRs; The Custom-Fit Video Recorder Bag (VR-1251) for RCA and Hitachi VCRs, the Video Transport Bag (VT-91 and VT-101); the Backpack Assembly (BP-4); the Small Bag (EP-2); and Tripod Bags (TP-21 and TP-22). All come with a lifetime guaranty.

Prices: VCH-77, \$39.95; VCR-35, \$59.95; VCR-66, \$74.95; VCR-201, \$109.95; VR-1176, \$108.95; VR-1251, \$109.95; VT-91, \$74.95; VT-101, \$84.95; BR-4, \$19.95; EP-2, \$12.95; TP-21, \$34.95; TP-22, \$44.95.

For additional information, circle No. 159 on Reader Service Card.

## Memtek Offers Improved VHS Tapes

Memtek, manufacturers of Memorex videocassette tapes, has expanded its VHS line to include the Pro Hi-Fi, Pro Cam, and HS series of tapes. According to Memtek, the Pro Hi-Fi and Pro Cam feature a 20 percent stronger cassette shell to resist the wear tapes experience in the field. Also included is an anti-static mechanism to prevent signal dropouts

# Discwasher.<sup>®</sup> The clear choice for video care.

Tape oxides can build up on your VCR tape heads. Result? Fuzzy picture, mushy sound. The answer? Discwasher Video Head Cleaner. It's a revolutionary, patent-pending, non-abrasive dry

cleaning system. The cleaning is thorough, removing impurities from both video and audio heads along the entire path—safely. With no harmful chemical solvents. Use Discwasher regularly

to maintain picture and sound clarity—and to protect your VCR from costly repairs. You can trust Discwasher, leader in the technology of audio and video care.



*The sound and sight come through clean and clear.*  
**discwasher**

©1985 Discwasher  
A DIVISION OF INTERNATIONAL JENSEN INC.

1407 North Providence Road, P.O. Box 6021, Columbia, MO 65205

For additional information, circle No. 20 on Reader Service Card



# WINNER TAKE ALL.

Now you can win this complete collection of CBS/FOX's 14 great James Bond movies.

Just stroll down to your video store, and (if no man-eating spiders, privately financed armies, or luscious lady assassins get in your way and attempt to crease your dinner jacket) fill out an entry blank for the **A View To A Kill** Sweepstakes.

While you're at it, check out **A View To A Kill**. It's the hot new Bond that proves adventure, wit, and sex will be with us as long as 007 lives.

In other words, forever.



Available soon on VHS and Beta Hi-Fi Stereo Videocassette.

Sweepstakes begins November 1st, 1985.  
No purchase necessary. Entries must be at least 18 years old.  
Sweepstakes ends February 15th, 1986. Void where prohibited by law.

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For additional information, circle No. 28 on Reader Service Card.



# HERE COME the **Littles** THE MOVIE



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For additional information, circle No. 114 on Reader Service Card.

# HERE COME the **Littles** THE MOVIE



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## New Products

from dust and dirt.

The HS (High Standard) line replaces the Memorex standard VHS tape. It delivers 1.5 dB more picture clarity (signal-to-noise ratio) and 2 dB better color reproduction (chroma noise) than its predecessor.

Memtek plans a "Frequent Buyer Program" under which consumers will receive rebates for purchased tapes.

Prices: Pro Hi-Fi, \$12.99; Pro Cam, \$14.99; HS, \$9.99.



For additional information, circle No. 160 on Reader Service Card

## RCA Packages Starter Kit

RCA has introduced a starter kit for first-time VCR owners. The UVT02 kit is for VHS VCRs. It contains a three-way surge suppressor to prevent voltage spikes, a blank stereo Hi-Fi cassette, a wet head cleaner to remove dirt and oxide residue from the tape path, an anti-static cleaning solution, and a handbook containing instructions on how to connect a video system.

Price: \$34.75.



For additional information, circle No. 161 on Reader Service Card.



## WOULD YOU BUY HI-FI VIDEO FROM A TV COMPANY?

The big word among video manufacturers now has become *audio*. Yet, the vast majority of companies trying to sell hi-fi video used to make nothing but TV's.

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# Fine Tuning

## Your Video Questions Answered

**by Roderick Woodcock**

### Industrial Espionage

**Q** I attended a recent industrial video show and saw a Sony Betamovie with an electronic viewfinder. Since I've been a Beta supporter from way back, and have a number of VCRs and hundreds of cassettes, I've been considering the purchase of a Betamovie, but would prefer one with an electronic viewfinder, so I can check out my tapes on the spot. Will I have to buy this industrial model, or does Sony plan a newer consumer version equipped with an electronic viewfinder?

Garth Wilson  
Los Angeles, Calif.

**A** It's true that Sony's industrial video division has a version of Betamovie that has an electronic viewfinder. However, if you're under the impression that you can play back your tapes on the spot with it, you're wrong. The GCS-1 Betamovie's EVF gives you the ability to frame and focus your scene more accurately and monitor the depth of field in your picture but it has no separate playback capability. Nor can you fast forward or rewind the tapes inside the camcorder. For that, you'll need a separate Betamax.

While I'd agree that the addition of an EVF (along with some customized circuitry to support it) on the industrial version is useful, it was added because most institutional users of the prod-

uct are more fastidious than consumers. When queried on the subject, Sony stated that it has no plans to add an EVF to any subsequent consumer version of Betamovie.

### Rogue Beta

**Q** I'm considering the purchase of a Sanyo VCR-7250 "SuperBeta" machine, both because of its price and features. But before buying the deck, I'd like to know whether you consider it one of "those renegade Sanyos" you referred to in your "Is Beta Sinking?" article in the August '85 issue. What were you describing?

Lewis S. Howell Jr.  
Morris Plains, N.J.

**A** Yes, I consider the Sanyo VCR-7250 to be a "renegade" Beta. While it's an adequate performer in its price range, I consider it a "renegade" because of the way it threads the tape. While the tape is wrapped around the drum in a U-pattern, consistent with the design of other Beta machines, it unthreads the tape and returns it to the cassette whenever you press stop. In this way, it is like VHS.

When fast forwarding or rewinding the tape, it moves directly from one reel to the other, bypassing the video drum. Actually, a small V-shaped loop of tape is extracted from the cassette so that the aluminum foil leaders will contact the end-of-tape sensors inside the machine. Once the rewind/fast forward cycle is completed, the lever holding the tape in this V-shaped position relaxes and the tape returns completely to the tape shell. Of course, in the visible picture search mode, the tape remains threaded around the drum,

enabling the video heads to reproduce the picture.

All other Beta machines (including many earlier Sanyos, and its diminutive VCR-3, which isn't Beta Hi-Fi or Super Beta) thread the tape when you load the cassette and shuttle it around the drum for ALL modes, unthreading it only when you eject it. In my view, the latter system is one of the principal advantages of the Beta system, since it facilitates easier and faster editing.

One feature of the VCR-7250 I did like, however, was its ability to let you go from the record/pause mode back to the play mode without unthreading the tape or pressing stop. While virtually all other VCRs I've seen and tested will let you go from the playback/pause mode into the record mode—an essential feature for accurate editing—I've only found this feature on a few Sanyo machines. It was also on the VCR-7200, last year's Beta Hi-Fi model, now discontinued.

Convenient as the feature is, I don't think it outweighs the principle advantage of the U-load (now also found in many 8mm camcorders and decks) in keeping the tape threaded around the drum for most shuttle modes. If you read "99 Steps to the Perfect VCR" in this issue, you'll see that in an ideal VCR, you would be able to choose between either system.

### Panic Buttons

**Q** I've had a Sony Betamax, model SL-5600, for three or four years now, and it's held up quite well, despite all the use it's seen. Lately, however, I've discovered a

problem with the tuner. The channel lights next to the buttons on the top of the machine no longer want to stay on once I press them. Sometimes one channel will remain lit even if I press another button. At first, the problem was intermittent but lately it has gotten worse. Sometimes I can't get the tuner to change channels at all.

I know that I'm going to have to get it repaired. What I want to know is if this problem is easily fixed, or should I just retire the machine and invest in a new VCR?

Scott Davidson  
Tarzana, Calif.

**A** I've seen a similar problem develop in a few other SL-5600s. Beneath each of the 14 silver buttons on the top of the deck is a small pushbutton switch. Unlike some mechanical tuners, where the switch is either on or off, the channel switches on the SL-5600 are the "momentary contact" type. When you push one of them, a small rubber cone inside the switch compresses slightly, allowing two tiny brass blades to complete a circuit and send a signal to the tuner to change the channel to the one you've selected. When you release the pressure, the rubber cone expands back to its original shape.

What has happened with your machine is that the small cones of rubber which give the channel buttons their springiness have deteriorated, causing the switches to fail. Unfortunately, you can't buy the switches as separate



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## Fine Tuning

parts. They're only sold as part of a complete circuit board, with 14 new switches already soldered in place. To repair the switches you'll need to pay the cost of the board, along with the labor required to remove the old board and install the new one. You could probably expect a repair bill of at least \$100.

Since brand new machines now sell for \$200 to \$300, I'd say you'd be better off putting that money into a new VCR, and keeping the SL-5600. Even though its tuner is now intermittent, you can still get plenty of use out of it as a play-back unit (or even as a recorder, bypassing the defective tuner using the direct audio/video connections).

### Flap Jacks

**Q** A friend recently returned from England with several British video magazines. On reading them, I noticed that, unlike their U.S. counterparts, which use RCA-type jacks for their audio and video connectors, the VCRs in Europe use the stronger BNC-type jacks instead. Why don't manufacturers use BNC jacks on the VCRs sold in America as well?

William Samuels  
New York, N.Y.

**A** Chalk it up to tradition or local practice. While European VCRs and many of the industrial decks sold over

here use the BNC (Bayonet Nut Connector) type of socket for their video jacks, virtually all North American VCRs use the less expensive, push-on, RCA-style connector. While the ubiquitous RCA jack is not as sturdy under stress as the more elaborate BNC jack, it at least has the advantage of being consistent with the jacks used on the many audio products that preceded home video's introduction. If anything, the use of the jack as a U.S. standard is spreading. Originally, many Beta VCRs used a miniature 1/8-inch phono plug for their audio lines but changed to RCA jacks when Hi-Fi audio came along to make it easier to connect the new high fidelity VCRs to component audio systems.

### Built-In

**Q** I'm a salesman looking for a lightweight, convenient VHS videoplayer that comes with a built-in TV monitor. What's available and where can I get it?

Ron Powell  
Chicago, Ill.

**A** Several companies now make such devices, including Hitachi, Dumont and the industrial video divisions of JVC and Panasonic. But one of the original suppliers of this product is a California company called Eiki International (27882 Camino Capistrano, Laguna Niguel,

Calif. 92677). Its "Eikivision" (no apparent model number) combines a 9-inch video monitor and VHS recorder/player into a single machine, featuring 7-day programming, an automatic repeat play capability, visible picture search and an optional four-function wired remote control.

### French Toast

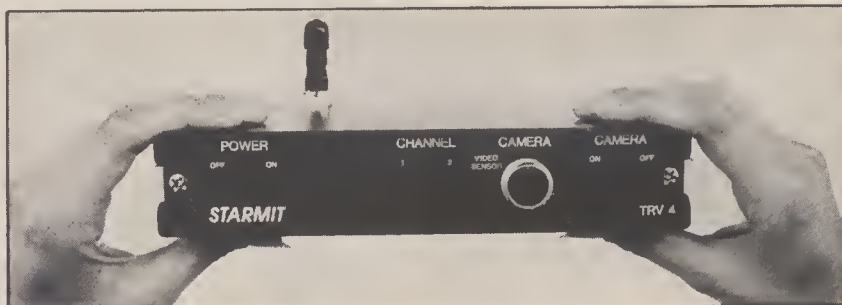
**Q** A few weeks ago I taped the movie *The French Connection* from a TV broadcast so I could compare it with the copy I already own on CED Videodisc. I expected to find a few scenes cut out of the TV version, and I did. But what surprised me more was the completely different look of the two copies. As expected, the CED version was much sharper. The framing of scenes in the two copies, however, was quite different. It almost looked like the TV version had been "cropped," the way that still pictures often are. Does this happen often? What gives?

Thomas Gill  
Los Angeles, Calif.

**A** Obviously, when a movie is first filmed, only one original negative is produced. But in the subsequent process of editing the film and preparing it for theatrical release, second generation negatives and prints are also prepared. One of those prints (preferably 35mm,

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Ray Milland and Carrie Snodgrass star in this chilling psychologic thriller that reveals—beyond the cobwebs—more than an old skeleton in the closet!

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## SOLDIER IN THE RAIN

Scripted by Blake Edwards, this funny and touching tale of army life stars Jackie Gleason and Steve McQueen with seductive Tuesday Weld, and shows that it's a friendship rare that extends beyond a few comedic scrapes with the top brass!

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## THE GIRL CAN'T HELP IT

It's literally a "who's who" of rock and roll as Jayne Mansfield, Julie London, Edmund O'Brien and Tom Ewell star in a gangster spoof that shakes, rattles and rolls to the sounds of Fats Domino, The Platters and Little Richard.

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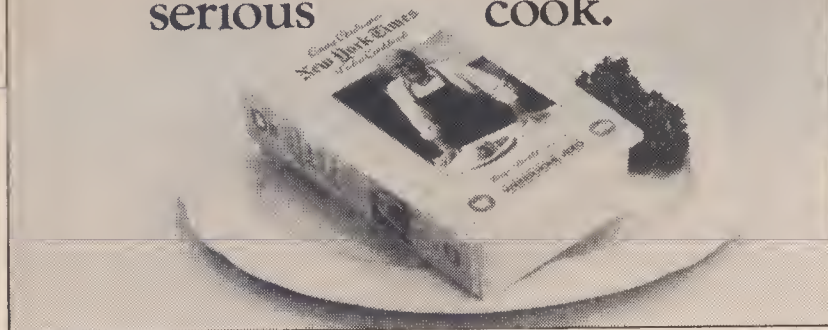
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## Fine Tuning

but sometimes 16mm, which offers fuzzier images and poorer color) may end up being aired on TV via a device called a telecine converter, which turns the film images into video images for broadcast.

More commonly, the film may be transferred to videotape before airing; again, different versions are often used. It's during this transfer that the subtle adjustments in framing occur. For movies originally released in a wide-screen format like Panavision, the transfer operator has to delete parts of the image at the edges of the frame so that what's left can fit into the three by four "aspect ratio" that TV uses. The visual differences you see between the two copies you have are the result of differences in the judgment of the transfer operators as to where to frame the image while the transfer was being made.

In all likelihood, your CED copy was transferred more meticulously from the original negative or a fresh 35mm print, while the TV version was from an earlier print, perhaps one that has been around for years. After all, *The French Connection* was originally released to theatres in 1971, years before the advent of home video instilled a new awareness of quality in networks, TV stations and viewers alike.

## Plastics

**Q** Please tell me where I can find the plastic black or clear boxes for VHS tapes. I can't find them in my area.

Gerald Winstead  
Rogersville, Tenn.

**A** One of the leading suppliers of these generic plastic slipcases is the Reliance Carton Corporation. Its address is 225 Belleville Avenue, Bloomfield, N.J. 07003.

## Fill In the Cracks

**Q** The screen for my model KP-5040 projection TV has numerous scratches and a small crack. The price of a new screen is around \$800. Does anyone know how to repair these things? Could there be a product available that would do the trick?

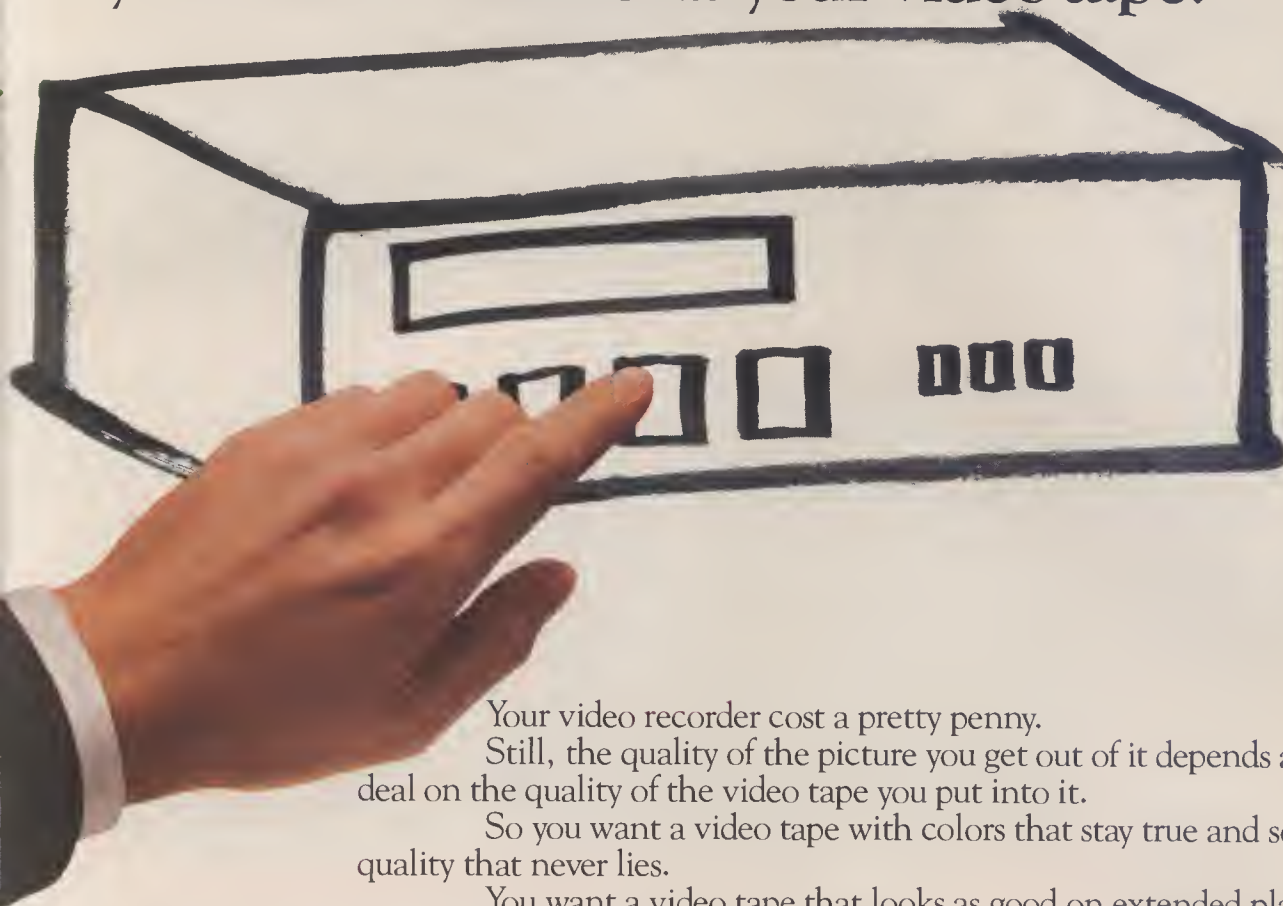
Brent Patterson  
Columbia, S.C.

**A** Where there's a need, an eager entrepreneur with ingenuity and know-how will always stand ready to fill the void. In this case, it's a company called Marv Hodges, Inc., 50 W. Easy Street, Simi Valley, Calif. 93065. It specializes in big-screen repair and replacement. There are probably others too, but I'm not aware of them. If they write me in care of this magazine, I'll be glad to add their name to my list of reader references.





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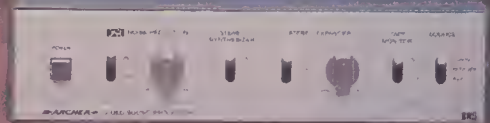
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# Videogram

## The Electronic Intelligencer

**Edited by  
Ben Templin**

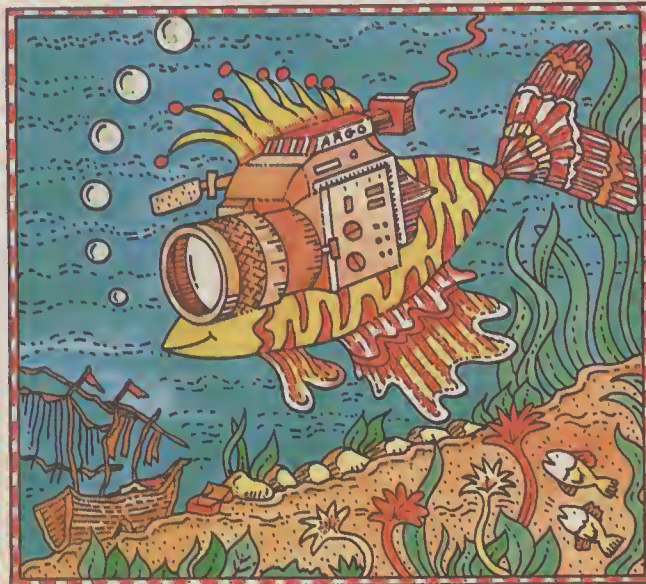
### Depth of Field

If a "swimming eyeball" sounds like soup from your local Korean restaurant or a leftover appendage from a Roger Corman flick, try a submarine-video camera combination. Scientists at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution are working on an unmanned robot sub that will explore parts of the ocean too deep for human divers.

Manned subs generally can't go further than 12,000 feet, while some of the ocean's deepest trenches reach 35,000 feet. Less than one-tenth of the ocean floor has been explored by human divers, and the robot sub, nicknamed the Argo, should make it relatively easy to gather data on ship and plane wrecks, mineral deposits, sealife, and underwater eruptions. The Argo has the added plus of being able to stay down for weeks at a time to keep a constant eye on underwater activity.

The Argo is controlled from its mother ship, the Knorr, by a 20,000 foot umbilical cable. Real-time video is transmitted from cameras suspended in an imaging pod beneath the Argo. Strobe lights flash every few seconds to illuminate the ocean floor. A four-acre area can be scanned using this system.

Images that have poor contrast or resolution are enhanced using a mainframe computer to restore detailed features. Scientists on board the Knorr view the pictures and compare them with those stored in a 15,000-image library stored in a computer. The Knorr is also equipped



with an on-board editing room to help catalogue the information.

The Argo will eventually be equipped with another smaller robot sub to send out on scouting missions. The Jason will also have video cameras as well as mechanical arms to retrieve ore samples. The Jason is still three years away from development, but the Argo was tested this fall in the North Atlantic.

The final cost of the robot may reach \$15 million—much of it coming from the Navy. Jason and the Argo are worth their high price tag. The robot sub found its golden fleece in the form of the sunken luxury liner Titanic late this summer.

### The Gold Bug

Here's a lucrative prospect for video sleuths—\$100,000 for solving GeoQuest's new mystery.

*The Gold Key*—marketed by Embassy at \$39.95—stars Ray Milland as the actor/producer friend of a murdered director. The director, anticipating his death, has left be-

hind a diary, miscellaneous notes, and instructions to his lawyers. Clues to his murderer are buried in scenes from his old movies. Milland narrates the sleuthing, though he is also one of the prime suspects. At one point in the video Milland is seen flipping through his old films (*Dial M For Murder*, *The Lost Weekend*, *Love Story*) in a film-editing room.

The 75-minute mystery isn't easy (what do you expect with 100 big ones in the grab bag?). Some of the clues are red herrings, but GeoQuest says each scene has important information necessary to solve the case. If you can determine the murderer and the location of a gold key, the cash prize is yours. Your local video retailer is sure to carry the tape since there's a \$5000 reward in it for him and \$2000 for the clerk who rings up the winning purchase. According to Milland, who appears in about three-quarters of the tape, he doesn't know who-dunnit either.

*The Gold Key* is being marketed on a limited basis and

video stores must place orders for the tape no later than December 23. GeoQuest will accept solutions to the murder after January 27, 1986. The first correct answer wins the prize.

—Julia Lisella

### Terrorist Tapes

Do video outtakes from a TV news organization have the same First Amendment protection as a reporter's notebook? The Justice Department's subpoena of network outtakes from the July 14th skyjacking of TWA flight 847 has blurred the issue. After some haggling between legal departments, the networks and Cable News Network (CNN) allowed Justice Department officials to view both broadcast and selected unaired tapes from their coverage of the 17-day crisis.

Journalists tend to resist such an attempt by law-enforcement agencies, claiming it infringes on their independent role. Citing the "unique circumstance" of the criminal investigation, ABC, NBC, CBS, and CNN agreed to cooperate because the information couldn't be had from any other source. In an attempt to identify the hijackers, network officials screened the outtakes to cull what was relevant to the case. FBI officials viewed the tapes at the networks' offices.

Will this incident set a precedent for cases in which news organizations will be asked to fork over tapes of confidential sources? Patrick Korten, a Justice Department spokesman, says several criteria have to be met before going to a news organization. If the information can be had any other way, then the subpoena won't be issued. "The threshold [of need] has to be very high," Korten says.



## No Stamp Needed

What started out as a convenience to 19th-century farmers who couldn't get to the store has gone glitzy and high-tech. Yes, mail order has come to video.

One company in the video mail-order biz is Videologue. Along with VCRs and camcorders, Videologue allows you to view high-tech gadgets to see and hear how they work. Have you heard about Butler in a Box? The talking remote control handles not only your lights and TV but performs voice-activated automatic phone dialing as well. At \$995 it's cheaper in the long run than a human counterpart—but won't bring you drinks. The Showering is a waterproof phone that can be programmed to dial 911 in case you're paranoid after viewing *Psycho*. You won't need a mirror with the Soundshaver. The portable unit has a light sensor that makes noise when you run it over your whiskers.

The Videologue is targeted to a decidedly upscale audience. The lowest-priced item is \$12.95, and prices quickly rise to \$4995 for a diamond necklace. The quarterly publication has a one-time membership fee of \$12.95. A toll-free number (800-692-0069) lets you order by credit card.

## Hearing Without Sound

Closed captions have been around for a long time, but a deaf person can't readily feel music with its shifts in tone just by reading the lyrics. One production company, however, is experimenting with music videos for the deaf by using interpretive signing. The video doesn't use closed captions. It combines lip-syncing, American Sign Language, and emotive dance and mime for a result that is not strictly for the deaf.

Spitfire, a professional dance troupe of deaf performers, joined up with Nova Productions of Indianapolis to produce a five-minute rendition of the Temptations' "Runaway Child" single. Choreographing dancers who can't hear the music presented some interesting production problems for director



Keith Graber. "I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to communicate my directions correctly but—though I didn't realize it before—I'm very visual about the emotions I want the actors to express. The dancers picked up on my body language quickly." Garber had to place people out of camera range to deliver motion cues.

The video, shot on only a \$2000 budget, is surprisingly fluid and responsive. The motion and mouthing are perfectly synched with the action relating to the lyrics. The end of the video lists the national Runaway Hotline number. Weisman hopes the video will run as a public service on national cable systems. Permission to nationally release the recording, which uses the Temptations' soundtrack of "Runaway," is still

forthcoming from Motown Records, but Weisman does have permission to show it in Indiana.


## TV's New Unmentionables

Switch to any of the nighttime soaps and you'll see more people hopping into bed than there are rooms in *Hotel*. Cybill Shepherd appears in lace underwear at least once a week in *Moonlighting*. J.R. Ewing slept with six different women in a single episode of *Dallas*. But put a pregnant woman on the screen and use the word "contraceptive," and the networks become embarrassed, mumble something about controversy, and shy away from broadcasting it.

Network programming departments, ever anxious to raise ratings with steamy

bedroom scenes, have refused to air a public service announcement about birth control. Produced by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), it intends to educate teenagers about contraceptives. The 30 second spot focuses on three women: one intends to be president; another to go to school; the third, not a little pregnant, to have a family, but not this soon.

The irony is outstanding. The networks say they don't want to run the spot because it will seem like they are promoting sex. Yet they have lost sight of the effect of their sexually provocative shows. Does the promiscuity in *Dynasty* and *Falcon Crest* shape teenagers' attitudes towards sex? You bet. The need for such information is great. There are over 3 million unwanted pregnancies in the United States each year. Dr. Luella Klein of ACOG has asked the networks to reevaluate their rejection of the spot. Klein also says she wants producers of soaps, sitcoms, and prime time dramas to redefine their characters' attitudes toward birth control. Will Lacey talk Cagney into going on the Pill before going out on more hot dates? Doubtful.

You can get a free booklet about birth control from ACOG by calling 1-800-INTENDS. 

## Vidbits

**Bummer**—From Texas comes a story about an Austin youth who began hallucinating "little people with VCRs" running up his leg after ingesting Ecstasy, LSD, marijuana and alcohol. Concerned friends, ready to rush him to the local mental hospital, asked if he meant that the elves had minicams. "No," he insisted. "They have VCRs. The cameras are hidden in the walls and transmit the signal to the VCRs by infrared rays." There's a gadget we'd like to see.

**You've come a long way baby**—Global Village, the premier studio that's educated the likes of video artists Alan Valez and Dara



Birnbaum, is celebrating its 15th year this fall. Global Village was the first to offer workshops in video, and it has progressed to offer courses in producing music videos and TV movies. Global Village is affiliated with New York City's New School for Social Re-

search.

## Sequelmania—

Sequels are never entirely *passe* but now they're hard to avoid. *Night of the Living Dead* spawned *Dawn of the Dead*, *Day of the Dead*, and *Return of the Living Dead*. Rocky is working on his fourth fight. Rambo will be off on an-

other mission. We'd like to see the studios come up with better titles than roman numerals for their serials. Recently we've heard suggestions for *Coffee Break of the Living Dead* and *Oh God, You Jerk* (with George Burns and Steve Martin). What do readers think?



# TV Den

## Techniques and Technology

### Here Comes Sneakyvision

by Roderick Woodcock



Back in the old days of home video, there weren't many color video cameras available for the consumer. When the earliest, 40- and 50-pound table model VHS and Beta machines first appeared on dealers' shelves in the mid-seventies, manufac-

turers thought of them more as time-shifting devices than as gadgets to make home videotapes. As a result, the earliest video cameras were fairly primitive devices, making only contrasty black and white pictures that were often marred by lag, streaking and "comet tails"—those jagged little blips of white light that would show up whenever the focused vidicon tube was aimed at a bright light.

Fortunately, it wasn't long before these clumsy black and white box cameras gave way to higher quality color cameras, which over the years have become lighter, easier to operate, and now offer a wider range of sophisticated features like built-in character generators and low-light capability, as well as

significantly better picture quality.

But black and white cameras haven't been totally forgotten and in one area of home video they have recently gotten a new lease on life as reliable and relatively inexpensive closed-circuit surveillance cameras. In these up-tight, security-conscious times, more and more individuals and businesses are turning to video surveillance to monitor and protect their homes and property.

Sony for example, recently introduced a product that combines a small black and white camera with a 4-inch Watchman video monitor. Called, not surprisingly, "WatchCam," the tiny camera has an 11mm, f1.8 fixed-focus wide-angle lens that can be attached to a "fisheye" peephole in a door so that a homeowner can see who is outside the door before he actually admits him. Is that really the delivery boy with the pizza you ordered (no anchovies, please), or is it someone else masquerading as him? WatchCam lets you know beforehand.

For added convenience, the unit comes with plenty of cable so that you can place the TV screen at a suitable spot in your home, saving you the steps it would take to go to the door and look through the peephole yourself. The single 67-foot cable (with optional 33-foot extensions) carries both picture and sound. The tiny half-inch Saticon tube inside the camera is sensitive down to 5 lux (or 10 lux if used with a fisheye lens) and powers up very quickly, so you don't have to leave the gadget on when you don't need it.

WatchCam's usefulness, however, isn't confined to

just checking out the folks standing on your porch. You can also use it as a video babysitter, placing the camera in the room of a sleeping infant or sick person to monitor their condition. In case you want to install it in your RV or Motor Home, there's an optional car battery adapter cord (DCC-40A). The HNS-12 WatchCam home security system, consisting of the HVN-302 camera and FDM-402 flat-screen monitor, plus cables and mounting hardware, sells for \$400.

While Sony's system allows you to "see" who's out there, Mitsubishi has demonstrated a prototype "video doorbell" that takes the caller's picture and prints out his photo on a thermal printer located inside the house. Just like the Sony system, an inconspicuous camera concealed in the door (if the lens is obvious it's a simple matter, after all, to block its view with your hand, frustrating the system) takes the caller's picture when the doorbell is pressed. Fifteen seconds later, a black and white picture of the guest emerges from the thermal printer inside the house.

Another ingenious application comes from GBC Incorporated (315 Hudson Street, New York, N.Y. 10013), a company that's been a video surveillance pioneer. Their newest product, which also uses a very small black and white camera is a "video rear-view mirror" for truckers. Anyone who has ever driven on a busy freeway or turnpike has probably imagined the difficulty drivers of large trucks and semis must have in seeing what's behind them. Up to now, their peripheral and rearward vision

Dave Ridley





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has been limited to what they can see with their rear-view mirrors, which they deploy in abundance. But there are still irksome blind spots where they simply can't see other vehicles. The most dangerous blind spot is directly behind the trailer, which cannot be seen effectively through any rear-view mirror.

GBC's solution is to install a small black and white video camera with a wide-angle lens in the door of the back of the trailer and a video monitor on the dashboard in the cab. GBS

spokesmen emphasized that its new system isn't designed to replace the rear-view mirror, which is still a good way to check for traffic on the left and right of a vehicle, but to augment the driver's information about where other vehicles are.

For home use, GBC has its own version of a home security system. "Video Door Vision" is a low-light black and white camera with a right angle wide-angle lens which scans the full area in front of the door. The visitor's picture ap-


pears automatically on a computer-styled monitor inside. Unlike Sony's system, which allows the audio from the camera position to be heard at the monitor, GBC's system has two-way audio that lets you talk to the visitor through a handset in the base of the monitor stand.

If "Door Vision" seems too elaborate for your needs, GBC also sells a model RF-2000 "TV Sentry" that's even easier to install. It consists of a one and a half pound black and white camera, an adjustable bracket for wall, ceiling or table-mounting, and 50 feet of RF cable to connect the camera directly to your TV, where the image will appear on channel 3 or 4. Accessories include wide-angle and telephoto lenses, all-weather indoor/outdoor camera housings, a multi-camera switcher and extension cables. The advantage of TV Sentry is that since it broadcasts a regular RF signal you can hook it into virtually any consumer-grade TV. It will even work with one of those black and white "doorbuster specials" you occasionally see being sold for \$50 or so by some of the larger video supermarkets.

In Los Angeles, one company specializing in customized video security systems for celebrities is Precision Video Technologies (830 S. Hoover Street, Los Angeles, Calif. 90005). One of its latest systems can be operated from an ordinary telephone. Want to see the picture from a certain camera? Just pick up the phone, press a few buttons, and there it is.

With newer and less expensive products like Sony's WatchCam and GBC's Door Vision, the realm of high-tech video security is becoming more affordable and available to us non-celebrities as well. If you're security-conscious, these products are ready to run, almost from the moment you take them out of the box. But if you've already got a VCR it's a simple matter to add an accessory power supply and an inexpensive camera to create your own special purpose closed-circuit system. You could, for example, place your video camera on a tripod in the baby's room, perhaps, and run the audio and video cables into a VCR in another room. To see the closed circuit picture, all you'd have to do is switch the VCR from the tuner position into the "aux" or camera mode.

If you own more than one VCR you could dispense with the separate audio and video cables, put one VCR in the baby's room, and run a cheaper RF cable into the room where the TV is located, broadcasting the picture onto Channel 3 or 4 of a second set.

These systems may not be as high-tech as the professional jobs but they do the job just as efficiently, bringing more convenience and peace of mind. 

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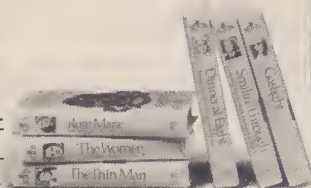




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© 1985 Nova Stylings, Inc. The ring (shown enlarged) features a quality diamond of 1.34 carats with 36 baguettes and round diamonds totaling 1.23 carats.  
© 1985 MGM/UA Home Video, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 Contest ends February 28, 1986. \*Manufacturer's suggested list price. No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited.

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# Random Access

## Personal Computers, News, and Games

### One-Way Wrist Computer

Okay, so it's not a two-way wrist radio *a la* Dick Tracy, but it's the next best thing. The Seiko Datagraph 2001, a.k.a. "Time-Trax," is an electronic toy that is sure to impress your friends, or at least be one of the world's most interesting conversation timepieces.

First, the bad news. It comes with a 72-page manual. Many of you will understandably refuse to buy a watch with instructions that are so intimidatingly lengthy. Second, it works with Apple II series computers. If you don't already own one, don't read any further.

Seiko is aiming this product at busy executives who like the idea of planning their day on a computer and then transferring the data (memos, notes, anniversaries, reminders) to the LCD screen on their wrists. Not surprisingly, the screen is hard to read in dim light. It's somewhat time-consuming to be this organized—even a little silly—to depend on your beeping watch to remind you that your cats must go to the vet for shots.

But we live in an age of beepers, so I plunged ahead and read the manual. The package consists of the ten-character-by-four-line display watch (the UC-2001),



Memos can be programmed into the Seiko Datagraph 2001 computer watch.

the program disk, and an interface module (the UC-2301) which plugs into the Apple's game port. To transfer data to the watch, you press the "transmit" button on the watch. The words "transmit stand-by" flash, and you place it on the module. Your disk drive whirrs, and your monitor tells you the transmission (at a very fast 2048 bauds) was successful. You hit the "mode" button. When "schedule" appears, you can use the two outside buttons to scroll up and down and see the message you composed on your

monitor.

Very heady high tech.

The watch itself is nifty, and lighter than the quartz watches introduced in the early 1970s. You can set it with a little experimentation and nary a glance at the manual. In its four modes it will tell you the day-date-month-time (one), set an alarm (two), act as a stopwatch with split seconds (three), and display programmed data (four).

The program disk is more complex but the on-screen menu is easy to learn. A touch of the Apple's return

key will format your text (a must because the display is so limited) so your messages are readable. The month icon looks like a wall calendar, which lets you plan as much as a year in advance. (You'll never be forgiven if you forget a birthday with Time-Trax.) The two notepads hold up to 1000 characters each, and the schedule carries 1100 characters. I wish the fairly primitive text editor had word wrap and a less cumbersome command schedule to insert-delete-change.

There are a few features that make this package a class act. A print menu that allows you to take a neat printout of your nasty reminders. It even scrolls the paper exactly down to the page perforation. The three AAA batteries are included, and Seiko adds a tiny Philips head screwdriver to install them. The price is a hefty \$189.

Why would anyone want a gadget like this? Because it's there. —Doug Garr

### Hippo Almanac

Remember those science-fiction films from the 1950s in which a scientist (invariably attired in a spiffy white lab coat and usually played by the immortal Whit Bissell) walks up to a computer keyboard in front of a room full of blinking lights. He could ask the machine just about any question—from "What time is it in Berlin?" to "How many calories are there in a slice of pizza?"—and get an answer. Today, of course, we know better. Computers can't answer questions like that. If they could, they'd demand we ask in COBOL or some other exotic tongue.

Well, science fiction often

### You Oughta Be In Pictures

The Jetsons generation has grown up and taken its tube fantasies into the office with them. A video telephone system that links up to an IBM PC has been developed by the Datapoint Corporation. The Minx system has a high-resolution camera built into a color computer monitor for face-to-face personal

teleconferencing.

Switching between the computer and video communications takes a press of the mode button. Any screens, like a spreadsheet, that you're working on can be switched to the video system by translating the image through a color graphics adapter to make it NTSC-compatible.

In multi-station calls, the

current speaker is put up on the screen by voice activation. VCRs and additional cameras (for reading documents off the desk or getting a large number of people into the picture) can also be added. However with high tech comes a high price tag—something in the neighborhood of \$10,000. I think I'll wait. Just send me a Polaroid.

—Ben Templin



becomes science fact sooner than we think. Witness the *Hippo Computer Almanac* (\$34.95 from Hippopotamus Software, 985 University Ave., Los Gatos, Calif. 95030). Designer Wendell Brown and a team of researchers claim they have crammed over 35,000 useful facts onto one of those tiny Macintosh floppies. Included in the database is the kind of information you would expect to find in the *World Almanac* or other general reference text, like currency exchange rates, sports trivia, about 1000 toll-free telephone numbers, astronomical data, geographical info, famous dates in history, key words in 34 languages, unit conversions, a calorie counter, financial calculations, and the latitude and longitude of hundreds of places on the face of the earth. Whew...

The nicest part of this information is that the program lets you use natural language to get what you want. Ask it "Who played in the 1945 World Series?" and it will tell



you that the Cubs met the Tigers and (what else?) lost. It is also smart enough to know when it's being asked to do arithmetic; for example, to figure the distance between two cities or the number of calories in a 16 ounce New York strip steak.

The *Hippo Almanac* is one of those program you wonder why no one devised sooner. It also presages the day when the digital compact disc will be used to access enor-

mous databases, like encyclopedias or the *Physicians' Desk Reference*. Until then having a *Hippo* on the desk is a step in the right direction.

—Tim Onosko

## Hacking Goes Legit

*Hacker*, the program from Activision (Commodore 64, \$29.95, Apple II series, \$34.95), should not be confused with hacking, the sport of whiz kids. *Hacker* is strict-

ly a game with a gimmick. As a game, it's fun. As an experiment in hacking, it's no contest.

*Hacker* begins—there are no instructions—by having you guess the password to gain entry into the system operated by the fictitious company Magma Ltd. Magma, you soon discover, is planning to dominate the world by capturing energy sources in 10 strategic locations worldwide. Crucial information concerning the Magma project is in the hands of 10 spies, each of whom possesses a piece of a shredded document. Piece it together and hand the information over to the FBI. Accomplish all of this in the allotted time and your name will appear in a simulated electronic version of the *Washington Post*. Realism counts for little here, considering that hackers' names usually appear in newspaper accounts only when they have been arrested for breaking and entering into a system.

—Steve Bloom

## Instant Avant Garde

Computers that play music have been around for years. But *Cantus* is probably the first microcomputer software that composes music. Like *Racter*, a program that creates readable (though non-sensical) prose, *Cantus* produces music—not songs, but music—after a fashion.

*Cantus* couldn't recreate a Mozart piano concert or a

Lennon and McCartney tune, but it does generate three-voice sequences of chords and improvised melodies. If the result is vaguely reminiscent of the work of contemporary composer Philip Glass (often referred to as a minimalist because his meandering melodies comprise a limited number of tones), it isn't accidental. *Cantus*'s creator is Michael Riesman, musical director of the Philip Glass Ensemble and the conductor of the recordings of Glass' "Glass Works," "Einstein on the Beach," "The Photographer," and the film scores for Godfrey Reggio's *Koyaanisqatsi* and Paul Schrader's new film, *Mishima*. Riesman says Glass himself has listened to *Cantus* and likes the results. With a pedigree like that, this marks the entry of world-class artistic talent into the micro-software medium.

*Cantus* is available for the Commodore 64, and versions are being prepared for other systems, including the Macintosh. (*Cantus* is \$54 from Algo-Rhythm Software, 176 Mineola Blvd., Mineola, NY 11501.)

—Tim Onosko



Illustrations by Wanda Yueh

## BEST SELLERS/HOME

1. **Print Shop.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
2. **Newsroom.** AP, IBM. Springboard.
3. **Print Shop Graphics Library, 1.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
4. **Clip Art Volume 1 for Newsroom.** AP, IBM. Springboard.
5. **Print Shop Graphics Library 2.** AP. Broderbund.
6. **Bank Street Writer.** AP, APc, IBM, C64, AT. Broderbund.
7. **Print Master.** IBM, PCjr. Advanced Product Solutions.
8. **Dallors & Sense.** AP, APc, IBM, MAC, TP. Monogram.
9. **Print Master Art Gallery 1.** IBM. Advanced Product
10. **Managing Your Money.** AP, IBM. Mecca.

## BEST SELLERS/RECREATION

1. **Jet.** IBM. Sublogic.
2. **Goto.** AP, IBM, MAC, PCjr. Spectrum Holobyte.
3. **Flight Simulator.** IBM. Microsoft.
4. **Flight Simulator II.** AP, C64, AT, DG. Sublogic.
5. **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Infocom.
6. **Wishbringer.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Infocom.
7. **F-15 Strike Eagle.** AP, IBM, C64, AT. Microprose.
8. **Karateka.** AP, C64. Broderbund.
9. **Sargan III.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64. Hayden Software.
10. **Zark I.** AP, IBM, MAC, AT, CP/M, DEC, TIP. Infocom.

LEGEND: AP = Apple, APc = Apple IIc, Ape = Apple IIe, AT = Atari, C64 = Commodore 64, COM = Commodore Pet/CBM, CP/M = 5 1/4" and 8" formats, DEC = DEC Rainbow, DG = Data General, EPS = Epson QX-10, IBM = IBM-PC, MAC = Apple Macintosh, PCjr = IBM PCjr, TIP = Texas Instruments Professional, TRS = TRS-80, VIC = Commodore Vic-20, VTR = Victor 9000, WNG = Wang Personal Computer, ZEN = Zenith 100. ©1985 Softsel Computer Products, Inc.

# Dateline Tokyo

## Letter from Japan

### by Ichiro Kakehashi

#### Lyonizing Lisa

A cult following is building here for Lisa Lyon, a champion body-builder who has discovered another vehicle in the world of Japanese art. CBS/Sony helped bring to the small screen a somewhat zaf-tig version of Lisa Lyon, as the subject of a video produced by Tadanori Yokoo, called "Adept Arcana: The Whole Deck."

Lisa Lyon became well-known in Japan as much for her body-as-art philosophy of physical fitness as for her posture as an artist who is her own work. If that seems obscure, consider that Lyon's video, which was shot on location in Hawaii and pre-viewed in Tokyo, is based on the 22 trumps of the Tarot, the ancient fortune-telling cards.

"My life is my art form," Lyon told me in an interview. "I don't feel anything is closed to me, and I will do whatever I can to advance my art." With appreciation for the reaction she receives here, she adds: "Thank God Japan is one of the places where I am taken seriously." That may be because Lisa Lyon is only known in the United States as a female weight-lifter, although "Playboy" released two short videos that reflected her philosophy.

But in Japan Lisa Lyon

seems to be everywhere. She has performed live, on talk shows, in commercials and for a department store poster. This year, Tadanori Yokoo, a well-regarded painter and sculptor, branched into video. He portrayed Lyon in giant wall murals of ceramic tile, on Kraft paper, in charcoal and oils, and in body castings. One installation had about four dozen white fiberglass Lisa Lyons, looking like figureheads for a ship, dangling from the giant Techno-Cosmos ferris wheel of the semi-successful Expo '85 that closed in September.

At age 32, Lisa Lyon is as much a pragmatist as an artist. While in Tokyo for the premier of her collaborative video and multi-media appearance, she shot a series of body-building shorts for TV Tokyo, in which she demonstrates slow-motion, keep-in-shape exercises in the company of six slightly awed young men—who are not in nearly as good shape as she.

#### Heard a Good One Lately?

The audio-video crossover business is booming, with enhanced image quality and, now, for aural ambience chasers, enhanced audio quality, too. Manufacturers such as Matsushita, Sony, JVC, Sanyo, and Sharp are promoting component systems that can be expanded with "surround sound" based on a circuit similar to one designed by Dolby Laboratories, Inc., in San Francisco. The idea is to provide the same level of audio "presence" at home that viewers have come to expect at good

movie theaters and concert halls. It appears to be an improvement on the ill-fated quadraphonic systems of a decade or more ago.

With the expansion of stereo TV programming in the United States and the growing number of videocassettes with Dolby-processed soundtracks, the new equipment seems worth the investment—even in Tokyo, where my ridiculously small apartment would otherwise not qualify as a haven of audio fidelity.

One example of new equipment with surround circuits comes from Matsushita. The TH21-H12VR was the first TV in Japan to have it. The people at Matsushita think video is very important, and their perspective includes more than 100 million TV sets since the first black-and-white model rolled off Matsushita's Osaka line in November 1952.

The new set, with a grey-faced, nearly-flat, 21-inch picture tube, puts out the sound at 4 watts per channel through a pair of 5-cm-diameter two-way speakers and flat, 8 by 12-cm rectangular bass reflexes mounted on either side of the screen. The speakers are shielded against magnetic distortion from the picture. The quad effect comes from a spherical speaker, the SB-S30, which sits on its own stand behind the viewer.

There are terminals for two other video inputs, and the video signal is treated for contrast and linearity, then passed through a comb filter

for improved brightness and higher resolution. The suggested retail price in Japan is about \$790 at the current rate of exchange. The optional round ambience speaker costs about \$26.

The Sharp corporation has also been working with Dolby Laboratories, Inc. to develop the quadraphonic effect for home video. Sharp engineers have added some of their own ideas, putting them in a series of products called Key Station, a 28-inch component TV (28M-K7B) with a somewhat steep suggested domestic retail price of about \$1,635.

The set has a separate audio-video tuner-amplifier. The speakers are similar to the shielded, bass-reflex combination on the Matsushita set. It is bigger and more powerful, however, with a rated audio output of 30 watts per channel. The Sharp set has six audio inputs and five image inputs, including two for RGB—one from a personal computer and one from another video monitor. The set can be tilted upward 10 degrees, which makes it easier to see if it's put on the floor.

Mindful of what happened with quadraphonic stereo a decade or so ago, both Matsushita and Sharp want to see how well surround sound is accepted in the domestic market before taking it on the road. Sets could be available for export in time for Christmas.

#### Filling a Cavity In the Market

You may think of other, clever one-liners to follow



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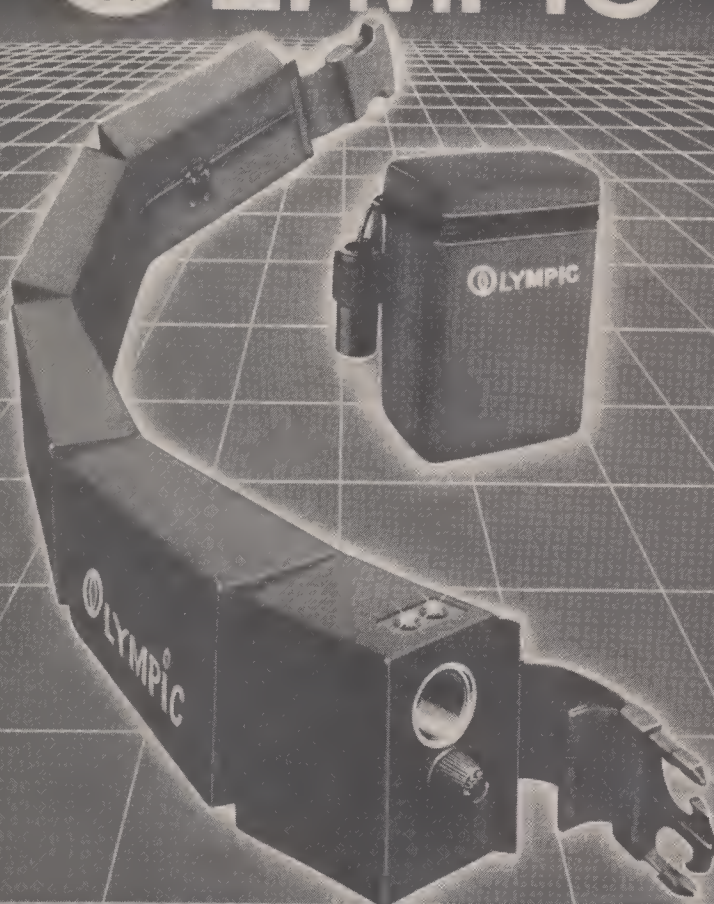


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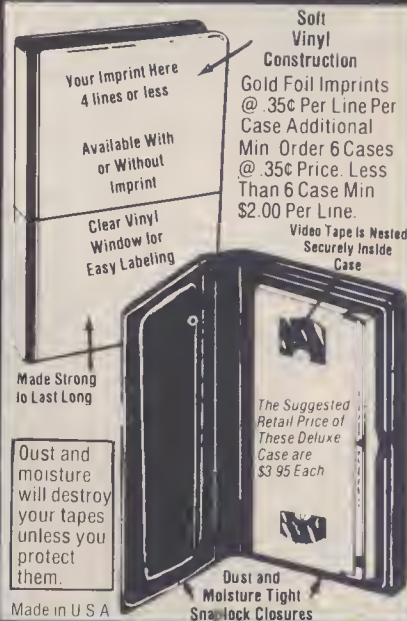
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## Dateline Tokyo

the cracks about the decaying image of video, but dentists do have good ideas sometimes. A Nagoya-based company called Dentopia, which integrates and markets dental equipment, has come up with a 52-inch, reflection-projection TV it calls Deccavision X512.

The equipment uses a standard, 15-inch color TV in a housing facing a concentrating pair of lenses of different focal length. The lenses concentrate the image into a single-beam output that is thrown onto a highly reflective, parabolic screen made of polished plastic coated with a vacuum evaporation-deposition aluminum film.

The suggested domestic retail price, including a wireless remote control, is about \$920. The equipment was originally put together to demonstrate dental procedures, but the people at Dentopia were struck by the obvious consumer potential of a costly alternative to bulky, three-tube projection TVs. They decided Deccavision filled a gap, so to speak.

## Star Gazing

One of the most popular pastimes among ordinary Japanese is following the movements of the not-so-ordinary and "geinokai," members of the world of entertainment. Among these idols are a few foreign luminaries. One is Kent Gilbert, an American lawyer whose deftness with the Japanese language and missionary charm won him fame as a panelist on a quiz show similar to *The Price Is Right*. In the show, the panelists guess the price of a London taxi, or a New York pay phone, or rhino steak.

Gilbert is also famous for his place on the list of the biggest money-makers in Japan, based on personal income taxes.

The Tax Office put Konosuke Matsushita, founder and chairman-emeritus of the Matsushita Electric Industrial Company on top, with an estimated \$5.5 million income. But in the video category, Kenji Suzuki, an announcer for NHK-TV, was the most heavily burdened by taxes, based on income of \$89,975.

How quickly they forget: you may have read about, or even seen the acclaimed 1983 NHK-TV drama *Oshin*, which scored record ratings—65 percent in the Nielsens on some episodes. The year-long drama even won praise from President Ronald Reagan, who pronounced it like "Ocean," rather than "Oh-sheen." Anyway, *Oshin* gave a big career boost to the already popular actress Yuko Tanaka. Her arduous portrayal so exhausted her that she took a half-year vacation before returning to TV last year for a two-hour NTV drama about the "other woman." This year, she hasn't done as well. She appeared with Kenji Sawada and Kenichi Hagiwara in a period comedy-drama *Capone Oi Ni Naku*, which was a box-office bomb.



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# Video's Guide to PROGRAMMING

## NEWS & VIEWS

### VHDud: Just What We Need, Another Videodisc Format

If the VHD videodisc system weren't such a hit in Japan, I'd swear George Romero was behind JVC's latest attempt to revive it here. So far the VHD story sounds like *Disc of the Dead*.

The story begins in 1980 when JVC's "Video High Density" was one of three more or less equally promising videodisc systems being primped for the press, if not yet for home consumers. VHD was the in-between child. Like the Philips/MCA laser system now supported by Pioneer, VHD used grooveless discs with thousands of tiny indentations called "micropits" that contained sound and picture data. Like RCA's needle-and-groove CED (capacitance electronic disc) system, VHD also used a stylus that came into physical contact with the disc. But while RCA's diamond-needle stylus rode the grooves like a conventional record player, VHD's smooth, flat metal sensor skimmed lightly over the micropits like a blind person reading Braille.

VHD's advantages over the doomed CED system were numerous. The laser system has proven to be a tougher adversary, though. In VHD's favor is the fact it offers playback effects and random access in the convenient hour-per-side mode, rather than laser's half-hour-per-side mode. VHD also uses slightly smaller, thinner discs. Like the laser system, VHD has two-channel audio. Its major shortcomings compared to laser are disc and



Illustrations by Debra White

stylus wear (since it's a contact system), its inability to freeze-frame segments other than those so encoded, and poorer picture quality (lower horizontal resolution). Besides that, most prototypes have been of expensive two- or three-part systems consisting of the disc player itself, plus a random-access controller and an "AHD" unit. AHD used to stand for "Audio High Density"; that is, digital audio. Now it means "Advanced High Density," suggesting computer data-storage applications. Either way, it has never been cheap.

None of this stopped JVC in Japan, joined by Thorn EMI in England, from successful-

ly selling VHD in those countries. Somehow, though, VHD has had as much trouble making it over here as the Titanic. First an "international consortium" (harrumph!) of GE, JVC, Thorn EMI, and Matsushita (Panasonic and Quasar's Japanese parent) was to bring VHD to the U.S. in 1981. Then it was 1982. Then 1983. They skipped 1984, but JVC's back on track this year though the consortium's been disbanded. JVC says this time it will do VHD right, getting it into the hands of industrial users and letting it filter into American homes. Among the new technological goodies VHD is said to offer now: 3D vid-

By Frank Lovece

eo! Hold me back.

Actually, VHD has already made it to the U.S.—sort of. Someone has a Sharp VHD player. He or she can't do anything with it since there aren't any discs here but nobody realized that when it was swiped from the mailroom of the Cunningham & Walsh public relations agency. Back in '81, I persuaded Sharp to let the magazine where I was working borrow one of the only VHD players in the country. A pair of Sharp executives hand-delivered it to me and I wrote up "an exclusive, hands-on report"

that may not have been Watergate but it was quite a coup. (Conclusion? I was less than impressed.) After we were done with the thing we returned it by messenger to Sharp. When we ran a trace on it some days later, we found it had indeed gotten there. After that, *Twilight Zone*. The Sharp executives never spoke to me again.

I don't think they could have been as upset as the person or persons unknown who stole the machine. The only thing you could play on it was a single demonstration disc, half in Japanese.



### Concerts and Concepts: Music Video's 'Language'

Dinosaurs are not extinct, living on as they do in the form of concert videos. Concert "movies" were bearable enough in the communal atmosphere of a theater but after watching a straight-through concert video lumber through your living-room for an hour or two, and enduring as many minutes of applause and cheering as in the average TV game show, you gradually realize what marathoners must feel like when they hit *The Wall*. And not Pink Floyd's, either.

Fortunately, the language of music video is volatile and evolving—and it's dispatching its elephantine form to the bone farm. A hybrid form is emerging, combining straight stage footage with conceptual bits that pace the show, provide benchmarks, weave a narrative flow. What should we call it? Let's try "conceptual concert video."

Led Zeppelin, of all groups, realized years ago that most concert films aren't meant to be documentaries. As a result, the group's 1976 concert flick, *The Song Remains the Same*, includes a fictional sword-and-sorcery narrative. It may not have been J.R.R. Tolkien but it was better than staring at guitar picks and drumsticks for another 20 minutes. Yet few other bands and filmmakers picked up the idea of adding a frame of fictional narrative. Most

concert videos until lately have been literal-minded to the point of including every lit-match moment between encores.

One of the first performers to break the tradition was synth-star and sometime video-director Thomas Dolby. His *Live Wireless* tape is a film-within-a-film-within-a-film that caroms off several planes of reality. Are you watching a concert, a movie about a character watching a concert, or a concert that includes a backdrop of a character watching a concert? Directed by Dolby, it's ingenious stuff.

With such cinematic pyrotechnics laying the groundwork, it took no great theoretical leap for rock-video producers to stop tacking song clips onto the ends of concert tapes and to start integrating them into the concerts themselves. The Eurythmics' *Live from Heaven*, Styx's *Caught in the Act*, and the Scorpions' *World Wide Live* represent three types of rock music as polarized as points on an equilateral triangle—yet each of these "concert videos" is actually a conceptual concert tape that places each group's stage performance within a narrative framework. Music aside, these and other tapes like them are much more compelling than the numbingly literal species slowly being herded to pasture.

Concert documentaries such as *The Last Waltz* and *Woodstock* have their place. But as the language of music video becomes better defined, start-to-finish concert tapes are becoming less the stuff of music fans and more the stuff of archaeologists.

### Pioneer Takes Us Back to 1984

Weiss, Dawid, Fross, Zelnick, & Lehman, the legal firm representing Pioneer Electronics as trademark counsel, is sending out letters laying claim to bits of the English language that most of us thought safe from invasion years ago.

The New York firm's two-page letter claims as a trademark not only the term "LaserDisc"—proper noun, spelled solid, capital "D"—but also "laserdisc" and "laser disc." The letter says nothing of "laser-disk" or "laser disk" with a "K," so presumably we're to mind not only our Ps and Qs but also our Cs. The letter goes on to state that "if you agree not to misuse these terms" you're to sign the missive and send it back.

This semantic strongarming is reminiscent of Orwell's *Newspeak*, from which words are eliminated to discourage complex thoughts. "Laser," after all, wasn't coined by Pioneer but by scientists who wanted a catchy acronym for "Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation." And "disc," a.k.a. "disk," landed at our feet from the Latin *discus* and Greek *diskos*, by way of the Greek root *dikein*, "to throw." Now Pioneer's trying to scare the *dikeins* out of us. Though Pioneer may have registered "LaserDisc", the words "laser" and "disc," like "ice" and "cream," existed long before Pioneer.

If Weiss, Dawid successfully circumscribes lasing's lexicon, it may be necessary to coin and use alternative phrases before anyone stakes a proprietary claim. How about "laser disque" and "lazer vision" to start?

### The Thought Police Eye Plain Brown Videotape

I once discussed erotic video with a fundamentalist minister who had led a group banning such tapes in Hampton Bays, New York. "There's nothing to see on the vid-





eotape itself," I noted. "You can't hold the tape up to the light and see dirty pictures. You have to put the tape in a VCR, which can be locked, and play it on a TV set, which can also be locked. What do you consider obscene," I asked, "about plain brown videotape?" He answered that technically, "the pornography still exists, the crime is still in the mind." He and his flock were simply seeing to it that the townspeople's minds would be kept clean.

That's nonsense but he believed it. Neither the reprehensibility nor the impossibility of mind control crossed his own mind, and so his group of 50 in a township of 42,000 have forced local residents to drive to another town a few miles away to rent sex tapes. Whether the minister's own town has any cleaner a collective mind is hard to say.

Yet what might have been dismissed as one intolerant demagogue in a conservative rural setting is becoming a frighteningly widespread reality. In cosmopolitan Los Angeles, nine video distributors were arrested in June on obscenity charges for carrying adult tapes. One distributor had to post a \$3 million bond, an amount normally reserved for mad rapists and ax murderers. In Memphis on April 17, the FBI raided 24 video retailers on obscenity charges, and on June 12, in a show of force seemingly influenced by *The Falcon and the Snowman* poster, two video distributors from Boca Raton, Florida were driven to Jacksonville (about four hours away) in handcuffs and leg irons. Each had to post a \$250,000 bond.

The thought police are becoming more active. A spate of new, often conflicting, and confusing local ordinances are combining with the bloodlust temptation of relatively easy busts. Major cases are pending everywhere, from Arizona—where a case is being based on racketeering rather than obscenity laws—to Ohio, where a statewide bill was introduced to ban the distribution of movies "harmful to children" under age 18. The phrase "harmful to children" points up the vagueness of many such ordinances: they can mean whatever one wants them to mean. At the crux of the matter is the question I discussed with that rural minister—if it's not the plain brown videotape you object to, then what is it? Our thoughts?

The Video Software Dealers Association (VSDA) seems to be distancing itself from both the evangelical crusade and its victims, though local chapters of the organization are standing up to challenges of both the ordinances and their applications. Partly due to the VSDA's indifference, however, receipts and other retailer documents are being collected and analyzed—names, addresses, credit-card numbers. Yours and mine. What we bought, what we rented, and when. What will happen with this data—who will store it and who will have access to it—is anybody's guess.

Maybe the next step will be to keep track of what we read.

# TOP 10 PROGRAMS

## Cassette Sales

**1. Jane Fonda's Workout (2).** \* Color. 1982. Jane Fonda assisted by seven instructors. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

**2. Pinocchio (4).** Color. 1940. Animated. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Disney.

**3. We Are the World—The Video Event (1).** Color. 1985. USA for Africa: Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, Lionel Richie, etc. 33 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. RCA/Columbia.

**4. Prince and the New Power Generation Live (-).** Color. 1985. Concert video features "When Doves Cry," "Let's Go Crazy," more. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Warner.

**5. Wrestlemania (3).** Color. 1985. Hulk Hogan, Mr. T, Rowdy Roddy Piper, others. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Coliseum.

**6. Jane Fonda's Prime Time Workout (7).** Color. 1984. 50 min. Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$39.95. Karl.

**7. Singin' in the Rain (5).** Color. 1952. Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor. 103 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MGM/UA.

**8. Wham! The Video (10).** Color. 1985. Music video clips, including "Wake Me Up (Before You Go-Go)," "Everything She Wants," more. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

**9. Star Trek III: The Search for Spock (6).** Color. 1984. William Shatner, DeForest Kelley, Christopher Lloyd, Leonard Nimoy. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$29.95. Paramount.

**10. Madonna (-).** Color. 1984. Music video clips, including "Like a Virgin," "Borderline," "Lucky Star," others. 18 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.98. Warner.

## Videodisc Sales

**1. The Karate Kid (1).** Color. 1984. Ralph Macchio, Noriyuki "Pat" Morita, Elizabeth Shue. 126 min. (PG) LV (stereo, CX, closed captions). \$34.95. CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**2. Starman (5).** Color. 1984. Jeff Bridges, Karen Allen. 115 min. (PG) LV, CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**3. Missing in Action (4).** Color. 1984. Chuck Norris. 101 min. (R) LV, CED. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

**4. 2010: The Year We Make Contact (-).** Color. 1984. Roy Scheider, John Lithgow. 116 min. (PG) LV, CED. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

**5. Dune (3).** Color. 1984. Kyle MacLachlan, Sting. 137 min. (PG-13) LV. \$34.98. MCA.

**6. The River (-).** Color. 1984. Sissy Spacek, Mel Gibson. 123 min. (PG-13) LV. \$39.98. MCA.

**7. Pinocchio (-).** See above, "Cassette Sales." \$34.95. Disney.

**8. Places in the Heart (-).** Color. 1984. Sally Field, Lindsay Crouse, John Malkovich. 113 min. (PG) LV. \$34.98. CED. \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

**9. Micki and Maude (-).** Color. 1984. Dudley Moore, Amy Irving, Ann Reinking. 117 min. (PG-13) LV, CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**10. Protocol (7).** Color.

1984. Goldie Hawn. 96 min. (PG) LV. \$34.98. Warner.

## Cassette Rentals

**1. The Karate Kid (1).** As above, "Videodisc Sales." Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**2. A Soldier's Story (-).** Color. 1984. Adolph Caesar, Howard E. Rollins Jr., Denzel Washington. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**3. The Falcon and the Snowman (4).** Color. 1985. Timothy Hutton, Sean Penn. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron.

**4. Starman (2).** As above, "Videodisc Sales." Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**5. A Nightmare on Elm Street (8).** Color. 1984. John Saxon, Ronee Blakely. 92 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Media.

**6. The Flamingo Kid (3).** Color. 1985. Matt Dillon, Richard Crenna, Hector Elizondo. (PG-13) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Vestron.

**7. Runaway (-).** Color. 1984. Tom Selleck, Gene Simmons. (PG-13) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**8. Pinocchio (-).** As above, "Cassette Sales." \$79.95. Disney.

**9. The Terminator (5).** Color. 1984. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Michael Biehn. 108 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**10. The Mean Season (-).** Color. 1985. Kurt Russell, Mariel Hemingway. 103 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

# R E V I E W S

## FILM CLIPS

Produced for Theaters

### The Purple Rose of Cairo

Color/B&W. 1985. Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels, Danny Aiello, Dianne Wiest; dir. Woody Allen. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV, CED. \$29.95. Vestron. Reproduction: B+

Like the movies his leading character Cecelia is constantly escaping to in *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, Woody Allen's fantasy promises romance, adventure, and the man of Cecelia's dreams. Allen delivers all that and more—just before pulling the rug out from under us all. Life ain't the movies, dearie, and you should've known it.

This Depression-era comedy is absolutely real in its roots. During those hard times, when so many people were out of work and a girl was grateful to be slinging hash, the American public took refuge in the movies. Cecelia is miserable at work and at home, where her bullying husband knocks her around. But every evening (and some afternoons) at the Jewel Theatre, she's in heaven, and the stars on the screen are the only ones she ever sees. She knows the names of all of Ginger Rogers' husbands. The art-deco world up there on the screen is the only world that doesn't disappoint her.

We've all fallen in love with a movie star. It is the central conceit of *The Purple Rose of Cairo* that a movie character falls in love with Cecelia and walks right off the screen to prove it. Entering the astounded audience of the Jewel and sweeping Cecelia off her seat is a dashing adventurer, complete with pith helmet, who hides out in Cecelia's neighborhood, throwing the rest of the movie's characters—and later all of Hollywood—into disarray.

All this playing around with the real and unreal ramifications of Cecelia's romance gives Allen's cinematographer Gordon Willis a chance to dazzle us once again with special effects, especially when the actor who portrayed Cecelia's hero shows up to join the search for the missing character

and comes face to face with his own artistic creation. The movie-within-the movie, meanwhile, continues to unreel at the Jewel while its characters, waiting for their piece of exposition to return, improvise and complain and trade comments with the audience. (Allen, as usual, has cast his film impeccably.) And when Cecelia herself is lifted into the screen by her handsome fantasy man, she's treated to a night-on-the-town montage that would've done Warner Brothers proud.

Cecelia's letdown is hard: Allen gives her no future except in further escapes to the movies, and though we too can momentarily forget our troubles by basking in the glow of Fred and Ginger dancing cheek to cheek, it's not a permanent happiness for Cecelia or for us. Having had fantasy dangled before our eyes, we can't help but find its ending ineffably sad.

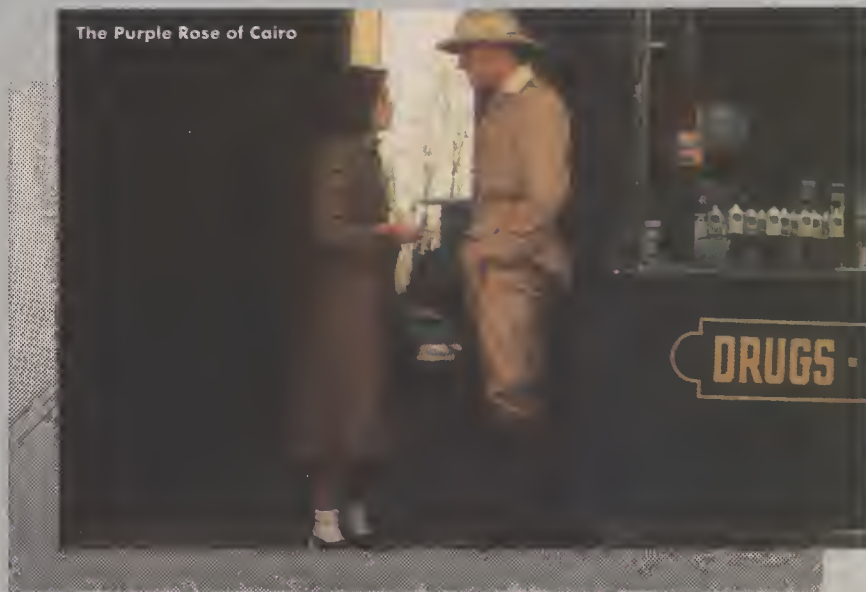
Jeff Daniels makes a winning cad as well as an idiotically believable screen hero. (I wonder if Allen was thinking of Fellini's *The*

*White Sheik* as the synthesis of these two characters.) The supporting cast, both onscreen and off, is a delight. And Mia Farrow as Cecelia continues to surprise and satisfy—this time having uncannily adopted Allen's own speech patterns. Unlike the apotheosis Allen reached with former leading lady Diane Keaton in *Annie Hall*, the quintessential collaboration between Allen and his current gifted star may still be years away. In the meantime, I'll be happy to watch everything they do together.

Though Allen scrupulously oversees every video transfer of his films, I can't help but think Vestron has failed him here. The movie's realistic sections are intentionally drab, but browns overwhelm the VHS release, which is also occasionally grainy as well as muddy. Not that the sun ever really shines on Cecelia's humdrum world. Onscreen at the Jewel, everything's right with the black & white.

—Harvey Elliott

The Purple Rose of Cairo





## Garbo Talks

Color. 1984. Anne Bancroft, Ron Silver, Carrie Fisher, Catherine Hicks; dir. Sidney Lumet. 104 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. CBS/Fox. Reproduction: B+

## Grand Hotel

B&W. 1932. Greta Garbo, John Barrymore, Joan Crawford, Wallace Beery; dir. Edmund Goulding. 113 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95./LV. \$34.95. MGM/UA. Reproduction: A-

## Anna Christie

B&W. 1930. Greta Garbo, Charles Bickford, George F. Marion, Marie Dressler; dir. Clarence Brown. 89 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MGM/UA. Reproduction: B+

## Wild Orchids

B&W. 1929. Greta Garbo, Lewis Stone, Nils Asther; dir. Sidney Franklin. 119 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MGM/UA. Reproduction: A-

Whatever else it fails to do—and *Garbo Talks* does ultimately fail along several different lines—Sidney Lumet's sweet-natured elegiac comedy does manage to invoke the mystique of its eponymous star/subject with the kind of awe that still attends first viewings of her films. Garbo worship has been created by her eloquent screen presence, nurtured by her early retirement, and kept alive by a passion for privacy that—more than forty years after her last movie—makes Greta Garbo both an inaccessible legend and a tantalizingly real fact. She lives in New York, goes to the market, walks all over the East Side, and is even occasionally found slipping in and out of revival houses that are showing her old films. Normally *blase* New Yorkers can be struck dumb at the sight of her striding down the sidewalk in her Adidas and sunglasses. When spotted she's never approached, as if in obeisance to some unwritten law respecting her wishes.

Some would find Lumet's movie—about that very mystique and what it means to a dying woman and her devoted son—an enormous invasion of that privacy, filled as it is with hints about where to find her and what alias she uses. But Lumet's touch is so gentle, and his leading actress Anne Bancroft so wise in her elucidation of how celebrities can often become touchstones in the lives of the not-so-great, that *Garbo Talks* is like an antidote to *The King of Comedy*. Its winsome good nature is slightly dulled by a sketchy unhappy-marriage subplot involving an unappealing Carrie Fisher and a silly office life for its hero (Ron Silver). But as romantic fantasy it is fueled by Garbo's offscreen presence.

Discovering her through her movies is a pleasure MGM/UA is finally allowing us through three recent releases which—along with *Ninotchka* (see "Film Clips," March 1985)—chart her career as screen icon and subtle actress. In *Grand Hotel* she is part of an ensemble of MGM stars in four or five subplots, some of which intersect and some of which are never even resolved in the 36 hours of the film's action. All of them pale beside the tragic, brief love affair

between the fragile, volatile, insecure ballerina Grusinskaya and the jewel thief (John Barrymore) who won't be waiting for her at the train station as she expects. Garbo's quicksilver changes of mood—from the neurotic insecurity that makes her proclaim "I want to be alone" to the giddy, girlish anticipation of having her lover return—are miraculously real. Our hearts soar and fall with hers.



In her silents Garbo played without exaggeration yet managed to convey an extraordinary range. *Wild Orchids* takes her through marital bliss, neglect, frustration, and the temptation of illicit sex in its exotic story of a Javanese planter bent on seduction. Garbo is required to play both cold and hot, but accomplishes her transitions without any of the arbitrary action silent performers generally call upon to bridge sections of unspoken screenplay.

And when "Garbo talks" in *Anna Christie*, it is with a timbre and irony that few early sound actresses could match. Tedious in its outdated morality and constant reiteration of "that old devil sea," Eugene O'Neill's play is transformed by Garbo into a living, breathing thing. As the prostitute trying to go straight, Garbo's Anna transcends social stereotype as she tries to rediscover a childlike innocence while fighting a preordained destiny that she knows will come back to haunt her. We are as mesmerized by her voice as by her face, and Garbo can make us believe what O'Neill alone can't: that Anna can make men forget her past. That Anna has a future.

These tapes are a godsend. While *Garbo Talks* has a blurry washed-out pallor that becomes blandly monotonous, it has a clear track and a refreshing Cy Coleman score, plus some terrific black & white clips from Garbo classics. But why settle for pieces when we have the real items? *Wild Orchids* is well-scored, in period, and suffers only when soundtrack effects are gracelessly added. They all look great except for a few cracks here and there. (MGM's art direc-

tor Cedric Gibbons and cinematographer William Daniels are the real *auteurs* of the Garbo films.) Give us some more, right away. And don't be stingy, baby.

—Harvey Elliott

## The Rules of the Game

B&W. 1939. Marcel Dalio, Jean Renoir; dir. Jean Renoir. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes. Reproduction: C+

## The Grand Illusion

B&W. 1937. Jean Gabin, Erich von Stroheim; dir. Jean Renoir. 111 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes. Reproduction: B+

*Annie Hall* contains one of the most disconcerting lines in recent film history. A smug, smarmy Hollywood pop star (Paul Simon) shows Woody Allen and Diane Keaton his screening room. "You know what movie we showed here last night? *Grand Illusion*," he says. Allen's reaction to this makes clear his (character's) feeling that (1) screening rooms are only for out-of-touch philistines and (2) so is *Grand Illusion*. Say it ain't so!

*Rules of the Game* shows rich people at a country house, all after each others' spouses—classic French farce, yes? Yes, but so brilliantly does Renoir manipulate the rules of farce that they too become part of his quite serious (yet always funny) expose of all such rules as empty artifices that are the root of the problem rather than the social lubricant they seem. From the spectacle of Renoir himself in a bear suit to the graceful hyperwitty dialogue characteristic of drawing-room comedy, the movie alternates pratfalls with mordant comic detail, leading finally to the Act I gun going off in Act III—a tragedy that leaves everyone wiser but no better-equipped than before to do anything about it.

In *Grand Illusion*, the granddaddy of all prisoner-of-war dramas, Renoir achieves perfection by layering his themes, be they the illusion of war's glory, that of the solidarity of the nobility, that of the solidarity of the lower class, or that of the solidarity of nationality in the face of basic humanity. Thus a noble betrays his class to save a prole and a Jew, a peasant woman betrays her country to save a pair of enemy soldiers, and all are betrayed by the notion of a "just war" (here, WWI). For all the characters, personal interaction is the great leveler as well as the source of the humane spirit of tolerance central to all Renoir's work. Here too it is the stray detail, the odd but affecting moment that best demonstrates Renoir's genius.

In both films he lavishes care on, and receives great performances from, his actors, notably Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, and Erich von Stroheim in *Grand Illusion*; Roland Toutain, Nora Gregor, Mila Parley, and himself in *Rules of the Game*; and Marcel Dalio in both. These performances, like the subversion of adherence to the rules of farce, are reflexive—commenting and signifying at the same time. This is why Renoir belongs in any pantheon one could name, and why anyone who can stand to



watch a movie with subtitles soon finds himself a Renoir enthusiast.

Kartes has seemingly relied on prints from the era of the films' initial art-house popularity (the 1950s) and, as the art of deciphering illegible subtitles was then in vogue, the American distributors felt no need to either completely translate the dialogue or make sure it could be read. *Grand Illusion* suffers least from this problem, but neither VHS tape is easy on the eyes. If you understand French there's no problem, for the sound is OK. But if, like me, you don't *parler* much beyond "*J'aime Renoir*," you're in trouble—a *mot* for the wise.

—M. George Stevenson



### **Prelude to War**

B&W. 1942. Dir. Frank Capra. 54 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite. Reproduction: B+

### **The Negro Soldier**

B&W. 1943. Dir. Frank Capra. 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite. Reproduction: B+

When Hollywood went to war, no one was better used than director Frank Capra, who was put to work by Chief of Staff General George Marshall directing films for the U.S. Army Signal Corps. One of Marshall's biggest concerns at the outbreak of America's involvement in World War II was that young Americans, called upon to drop everything and train to fight some vague European or Asian terror, wouldn't appreciate the gravity of their task—or even the reasons for it.

That's how the "Why We Fight" series was born. It was initially meant to be seen by servicemen in training, who would be taught the historical background of the Axis peril as well as more or less force-fed wartime spirit, incentive, and patriotism. The fame and artistry of the seven films in the War Department series soon spread further than the training camps. *Prelude to War*, the first in the group (and the first to be made available by Spotlite in its "America Goes to War" series), won an Academy Award as Best Documentary of 1942. Sta-

lin liked the one on Russia so much he put hundreds of copies in every movie theater in the U.S.S.R. Cumulatively, the films have become legendary in their masterful fusion of art and propaganda.

You'll find no director's ego stamped on these films. Frank Capra directed *Prelude to War*—but don't look for Capraesque touches like happy families and spunky heroines. This is an educational undertaking made fascinating rather than dully instructional because a man used to making entertainment put it all together. Tracing the beginnings of imperialist aggression from the Manchurian conquest of 1931 through Axis plans for world domination,

*Prelude to War* was designed to instill fear and loathing in the heart of every American who saw it.

Though thankfully short on jingoism, *Prelude* chooses to expose the German, Italian, and Japanese dictator/villains instead, and goes about it ruthlessly. "Remember these faces," narrator Walter Huston warns us as the images of Der Fuehrer, Il Duce, and the Japanese Emperor flash on the screen. "Remember them well. If you ever see them, don't hesitate." The War Department is asking for nothing less than assassination.

Depending on newsreel footage smuggled from the enemy, Capra lets the enemy leaders indict themselves as he translates their urgings toward world domination and genocide. But our side isn't above the occasional racist slur either, as Huston shows us a map of spreading fascism and warns of the German leader approaching America from the East "to hook up with his buck-toothed pals coming over from Siberia." Germans are particularly susceptible to Hitler, the narration tells us, because of an "inborn love of regimentation and harsh discipline" that makes them perfect soldiers.

After completing the "Why We Fight" series Capra made a few more films for the Army, and none was more celebrated than *The Negro Soldier*, which finally gave the

black enlisted man the historical credibility denied him by the popular press. Though still officially segregated from the white soldiers of the Army, even as late as 1943, black men had fought for America as far back as the Revolutionary War. A black man was one of the first to die in Boston and is buried on the Common. A black soldier crossed the Delaware with Washington. Black units were decorated in France during World War I.

Both of these training films have survived in pretty good print condition. Savor them as historical artifacts.

—Harvey Elliott

### **A Soldier's Story**

Color. 1984. Howard E. Rollins Jr., Denzel Washington, Larry Riley; dir. Norman Jewison. 101 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV, CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia. Reproduction: A

Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning murder mystery *cum* social study has been effectively transferred to the screen with all its intensity intact and its machinery still showing. What is fascinating about *A Soldier's Story* is its investigation into the black man's relationship with whites, circa 1944, and the divisiveness a certain amount of acceptance unexpectedly engenders. Less striking is the format Fuller uses, a haul-'em-in-for-questioning page from the reliable detective's handbook. It dilutes the raw and disturbing power of Fuller's bold and complex characters.

Master Sergeant Vernon C. Waters is shot one night on a Southern Army post. He is a black man who has worked hard to escape the ghetto, to throw off the shackles of ignorance and sloth (part of the black man's self-imposed burden as Waters sees it), to earn respect and respectability. His last words are "They still hate you." A man consumed by hatred of his race and ultimately himself, Waters has turned his unit into a battlefield, though these black soldiers are far from the European or Pacific fronts. He wants nothing less than equality with the white man, and with a peculiar mix of subservience and overcompensation for his color, sees no path to that equality other than denial of his own identity. Waters see every man in his unit as a Negro type. Fuller gives us the toadying right-hand man, the good old ignorant farmhand, the peacemaker, the incipient militant.

Touching on themes of segregation from the war proper, and local prejudice (even among officers) against the black Captain sent in from Washington to investigate Waters' murder, *A Soldier's Story* is nonetheless principally propelled by the case itself. As Captain Davenport (magisterially played by Howard E. Rollins Jr. in a manner suggesting not a little self-interest) questions Waters' men one by one, the film finds itself mired down in flashbacks and even a flashback within a flashback.

The meaning of "They still hate you" becomes apparent early on, though it's dangled before us through *A Soldier's Story*



like *Citizen Kane's* "Rosebud." After Waters' role in a young recruit's suicide becomes clear, the motivation for his murder could easily have been anybody's. By allowing its structure to accent the mystery while hiding its true strength—characterization—Fuller limits director Norman Jewison and bogs down his own fiery talent in manipulative theatrics.

A *Soldier's Story* has been handsomely transferred to VHS, khaki-colored and dustbowl-hot. Good cinematography is enhanced by a fine-grain image and good color. Audio clarity is exceptional, both in reproducing dialogue and the jazzy Herbie Hancock score. —Harvey Elliott

### Vietnam: In the Year of the Pig

B&W. 1969. Dir. Emile de Antonio. 104 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Maljack/MPI. Reproduction: A+

### Hearts and Minds

Color. 1974. Dir. Peter Davis. 112 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy. Reproduction: A-

It's no secret that Vietnam is an open sore on the American psyche, and after years of ignoring what—in World War II terms—was a defeat for America, *Rambo* has appeared to cast the blame, resurrecting the old hard line: "We couldn't win because 'they' wouldn't let us." But two documentaries made around the time of the war challenge that blind hindsight. According to *Hearts and Minds* and *Vietnam: In the Year of the Pig*, the real reasons why we couldn't win were evident (and blissfully ignored) all along.

Emile de Antonio's *In the Year of the Pig* views like straight documentary—to horrific effect. In a melange of newsreels, interviews (with members of the establishment), press conferences, and speeches (by members of the establishment) de Antonio traces the history of the Vietnamese conflict from the days after World War II to our troop escalations in 1968. With brilliant editing he ferrets out lie after lie, exposing not only myths and fabrications but also the fact that the people saying them *knew* they were lying. The con job unravels with such a structured lack of sensationalism—just like the documentaries you used to watch in school—that the horror becomes claustrophobic. Why, de Antonio asks, did we accept the lying for so long?

Peter Davis uses more modern techniques in his 1974 *Hearts and Minds*, which won the Academy Award for Best Documentary, and in this case the *cinema verite* style diverts attention from the facts behind Vietnam. But Davis isn't so much interested in facts as in psychological truths. He too is no stranger to the myths and fabrications of Vietnam, but he traces them to deeper roots: propagandistic Hollywood movies like *Bataan* and the *Fu Manchu* series, high-school football-team mentalities, the cultural and historical templates we tried to fit the Vietnamese into without any regard for the facts. To an extent de

Antonio also deals with these, but Davis has the benefit of hindsight. There are some stunning scenes: a crippled Vet in Detroit discussing our shunning of Vietnam veterans, a New Jersey POW telling a group of kids that we won the war, a peasant crying and screaming about his dead seven-year-old daughter as the Secretary of State claims that the Vietnamese are hard to beat because life is cheap to them.

The message is not that we could have won had we understood the real situation, but that if we had understood we wouldn't have been there in the first place. Both documentaries are tremendously important now that we are finally trying to understand what went wrong in Vietnam, and both (thanks in part to excellent VHS reproduction) are as fresh and full of insight as when they were made. While Sylvester Stallone and Chuck Norris are encouraging us to repeat history, de Antonio and Davis advocate learning from it.

—Steven Grant

### The Killing Fields

Color. 1984. Sam Waterston, Dr. Haing S. Ngor, John Malkovich; dir. Roland Joffe. 142 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Warner. Reproduction: A+

The Pol Pot regime in Cambodia is among the great horror stories of this century, producing such a degree of human suffering that the notion of a movie about it sounds at minimum tasteless. Surprisingly, *The Killing Fields* is instead a beautifully crafted monument to the human spirit. Based on a true story, it's far superior to others in the recent spate of Third World foreign-correspondent films (*Under Fire*, *The Year of Living Dangerously*).

Reporter Sydney Schanberg (Sam Waterston) arrives in the Cambodia of 1975 anxious to step on political and military toes in pursuit of The Story. He's a liberal ugly American, screaming about rights while treating his aide, Cambodian

journalist Dith Pran (Dr. Haing S. Ngor), like a servant. Nonetheless their friendship blossoms and grows, only to be ruptured when the Khmer Rouge take over. Schanberg is evicted from the country and Pran vanishes for four years into Cambodia's sea of misery. While Schanberg suffers pangs of guilt in Manhattan, Pran slaves in the rice fields and dreams of escaping to join his family in America.

Brilliantly evoking life under the totalitarian Pol Pot regime, the film recreates a hell undreamt of, where intelligence is rewarded with death, where people are beaten or shot for the slightest show of independent will, where silence and ignorance are the only means to survive. Joffe unleashes an array of haunting images: red bandana'd children armed with M-16s, a girl executing a peasant for not having worked hard enough, a Buddha-like commune leader embracing the unwitting condemned, a sandbar piled high with corpses. The dialogue in untranslated Cambodian heightens the unease and dislocation, trapping us—like Pran—in a world we no longer understand.

The film stumbles only when it tries to ascribe political responsibility for the madness (face it—no one could have expected it), and Schanberg's later appearances and murky political statements don't help. But John Malkovich is stunning as a photographer with an eye for the truth who puts Schanberg in his place and the movie in perspective—a small but great part. The real star is Ngor, who brings real sensitivity and humanity to—amazingly—his first role. Few pictures are as honestly powerful and important, and fewer still treat serious issues with depth and intelligence without resorting to gimmicks or platitudes. Exquisitely written, acted, and directed (and painstakingly reproduced on VHS), *The Killing Fields* may be the only war film this good in recent years.

—Steven Grant



The Killing Fields



# QUICK TAKES/FILM

## Thief of Hearts

*Color. 1984. Steven Bauer, Barbara Williams, John Getz; dir. Douglas Day Stewart. 101 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. LV, CED. \$29.95. Paramount. Reproduction: A-*

Now this is the sort of perverse trash that will liven up any rainy Sunday. Part Hitchcock, part *American Gigolo*, and influenced heavily by Calvin Klein ads, *Thief of Hearts* is preposterous fun, spiced up with some hot sex scenes that didn't make it into the American release. (You didn't know there *was* an American release? It was short.) Neglected wife of self-centered writer commits her innermost fantasies to her diaries, which are ripped off along with some paintings when a high-class thief hits their apartment. He sells the paintings and reads the diaries, becomes intrigued, and arranges an accidental meeting, sweeping her off her feet as—literally—the man of her dreams. He goes to work on her fantasies. Admit it: you're interested. The VHS tape, after a dark beginning, is generally bright and sharp.

—Harvey Elliott

## Falling in Love

*Color. 1984. Robert DeNiro, Meryl Streep, Harvey Keitel, Dianne Wiest; dir. Ulu Grosbard. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. LV, CED. \$29.95. Paramount. Reproduction: B+*

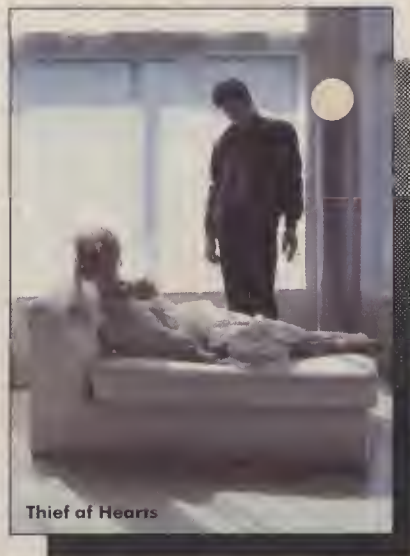
Any film starring DeNiro and Streep deserves a footnote, at least—even one as anemic and inconsequential as *Falling in Love*. Their brief encounter has no impact because smiling eyes aren't enough. The halting "I mean/oh yeah" dialogue goes on far too long, giving rise to unintentional laughs. We're supposed to sense their pain and guilt because their love affair is a luxury for them: neither is unhappily married, and they don't exactly live drab lives. (In fact, there is quite a bit of conspicuous consumerism.) But these suburbanites are duller than the dishwasher they never see, and their mutual attraction isn't enough to make us care about them. The VHS cassette is hazy, with odd unnatural greens. Sound, however, is great. We hear every stutter.

—Harvey Elliott

## Torchlight

*Color. 1985. Pamela Sue Martin, Steve Railsback, Ian McShane; dir. Tom Wright. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Embassy. Reproduction: A-*

Among the horrors of cocaine addiction are movies like this. As if to ensure the



Thief of Hearts

acting is as thuddingly bad as the writing, Martin handles both, transforming a serious subject into *As The World Turns*. Forget motivation, pacing, or insight; these are the sufferings of the idle rich! Steve Railsback costars as Martin's dope-fiend husband and both conveniently overlook the fact that there's much more wrong with their marriage than cocaine. The VHS tape accurately replicates the original film's murkiness.

—Steven Grant

## The Flamingo Kid

*Color. 1984. Matt Dillon, Hector Elizondo, Richard Crenna; dir. Garry Marshall. 104 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron. Reproduction: A+*

The year: 1963. The place: Brooklyn. A young man (Dillon) struggles toward adulthood. Rebellion against his domineering working-class father (Elizondo) drives him to a Long Island country club, where money flies fast and he comes under the influence of a card-hustling salesman (Crenna). The script is solid and the acting excellent, with affecting interplay between Dillon and Elizondo. *The Flamingo Kid* could have been a milestone for teen comedies if not for director Marshall's passionless sitcom style, which sidesteps intensity and real emotion at every turn—rendering the resulting domestic morality play sweet but unspectacular. VHS reproduction is excellent.

—Steven Grant

## The Inheritors

*Color. 1985. Nikolas Vogel, Roger Schauer; dir. Walter Bannert. 93 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy. Reproduction: B+*

This parable of the rise of German neo-Nazism is a disturbing film, and proba-

bly not in the way director/producer Walter Bannert intended. A middle-class German boy, ostracized at school and criticized at home, falls in with a fascist youth group and wallows in violence and fetishism. The seduction of bored unemployed youths makes ghastly sense, but Bannert is so fascinated with the process that we aren't sure where his sympathies lie. Despite the picture's overall anti-Nazi tone, it comes frighteningly close to a recruiting film. VHS reproduction is very good, though subtitles are often difficult to read.

—Steven Grant

## Hellfighters

*Color. 1968. John Wayne, Katharine Ross, Jim Hutton; dir. Andrew McLaglen. 121 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MCA. Reproduction: A*

*Hellfighters* is a film about men—real men. Men who roam the world fighting the most dangerous fires imaginable: oil-well blazes. The Duke, a well-known Red fighter, is too much in love with the excitement of putting out fires with nitro to lead a normal home life. This is treated as a romantic triumph. Jim Hutton is trying to lead a normal life with the Duke's daughter Katharine Ross. This is treated as true courageous love. Katharine Ross goes to all the fires. *Hellfighters* is a roaring adventure pic with mountains of flames and the simplest construction of personal conflicts. It's two hours of one-dimensional characters in grand action—but a rotten love story.

—John Leland

## The Wedding Party

*B&W. 1966. Robert DeNiro, Jill Clayburgh, Charles Pfluger; dir. Brian DePalma. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Vid-America. Reproduction: A-*

Hey, a Brian DePalma film with no Hitchcock references. *The Wedding Party* is a hip farce about a semi-beat guy (Pfluger) as he prepares to enter into a disastrous marriage with Jill Clayburgh. With a debt to *Mr. Hulot's Holiday* and Blake Edwards' *The Party*, DePalma creates a psychedelic state of noninteraction between the combatants at the prenuptial ceremonies on the bride's family's island estate. But he never establishes his characters, and we don't identify with the groom as he entertains second thoughts. Buyer beware: the cassette's box might lead you to believe that DeNiro plays the groom; he doesn't. He appears in a relatively minor role as a friend of the groom.

—John Leland



# VIDEO CLIPS

Produced for Home Viewing

## The Autobiography Of Miss Jane Pittman

Color. 1973. Cicely Tyson, Richard A. Dysart, Katherine Helmond; dir. John Korty. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Prism.

In 1962 a young white reporter from the North travels to Louisiana to interview the oldest black woman in America, 110-year-old Miss Jane Pittman. Cicely Tyson plays both the 110-year-old and 23-year-old Jane, unfolding pieces of her narrative from post-Civil War America up until the early stages of the civil-rights movement. Though Cicely Tyson's performance is strikingly faithful to the narrative, questions persist. Would a 110-year-old woman have remembered so much of her past in such an ordered fashion? Would she have been so generous in her recollections for this white reporter? For the sake of fiction, not to mention Tyson's performance, these doubts can be put aside. Jane Pittman is a fictional character you'll want to believe. Tyson's resonant, crackling voice reminds you that sometimes fiction can be more real than fact.

Unfortunately, Tyson has to carry much of the narrative by herself in this made-for-TV saga. Some of the leaps of narration seem perfectly acceptable and inevitable when broken up by commercials, but when all the events are locked together in a two-hour screening, they don't add up to a full story. For example, we don't know how Ned—the boy Jane Pittman cares for when his own mother is killed by the “panrollers” of the post-Civil War years—gets educated, or how he ever finds Jane again 20 years after he's bullied off their plantation by the Ku Klux Klan. Because of the vast historical ground this movie tries to cover, most characters aside from Jane don't go far beyond the surface.

Unlike Alex Haley's blockbuster movie and book *Roots*, where the lines are clearly drawn between blacks and whites, *Autobiography* draws on a safer though more curious depiction of American racism. Ned, a teacher and organizer, spouts the Frederick Douglass lessons: the problem is not color but ignorance. Often whites are depicted as little more than slightly mad. But for all the mercy that is bestowed on whites throughout the movie, the acts of violence against blacks remain undeniable. Jane Pittman loses her family and friends to panrollers when she is 11. Her husband, one of the best ranch wranglers in Texas, is killed by an eerie image of white brutality: a wild albino horse. Ned is shot in cold

blood by a Cajun fishing partner of Jane's.

Jane Pittman's triumph, in the end, is not just that she lives to a ripe old 110, but that she acts—first by granting the reporter his interview, and finally by drinking from a white-only fountain. Though its historical content is condensed and somewhat cryptic, *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* should be seen if only to enjoy the fantasy of a 110-year-old woman who witnesses the atrocities and the triumphs of American racial history. —Julia Lisella

## The Life and Assassination Of the Kingfish

Color. 1985. Ed Asner, Nicholas Pryor, Diane Kagan; dir. Robert Collins. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. IVE.

There were two sides to Kingfish Huey P. Long, fireball governor and congressman of Louisiana during the Depression. The first was a crusading reformer, a champion of the poor, who fought the political machine and battled to eliminate hunger, build hospitals and highways, and restore homes to the disenfranchised: a voice of the people, a cracker, a dynamic leader. The other side was a ruthless

megalomaniac who would do anything to assuage his hunger for power. Long was a bully, a manipulator, a grafter. He surrounded himself with yesmen and filled the Louisiana government with his puppets. He intimidated all opposition and engaged in brutal smear campaigns. Huey P. Long was living proof that power corrupts.

The two sides were intertwined. Long was possessed of a sense of mission which he felt justified any tactics to which he might resort. But in another sense, his crusade was also just an excuse to vindicate his lust for power. *The Life and Assassination of the Kingfish* tends to clean up the Kingfish's act and portray the first side of his character at the expense of the second. But because the two are intertwined, Long's corruption shines ineluctably through. And that is the strength of the program. Ed Asner as the Kingfish is vibrant, charismatic, and knee-deep in tricky pragmatism.

The program begins with a bullet in the Kingfish's belly and proceeds through a series of flashbacks for as long as he holds on. Long was shot in 1935 as he was about to enter the presidential race, so the program concentrates on the tail end of his political career—which is not necessarily the most interesting part of his rise to power. But the made-for-TV movie presents Long as an important figure because he might have made an impact nationally. It's an informative if not comprehensive look at one of our most intriguing political figures, a true American aberration. If Huey Long was, as Asner proclaims, the United States, then God help us.

—John Leland

## The Wind in the Willows

Color. 1983. Voices of Michael Hordern, Ian Carmichael, David Jason, Richard Pearson; animation dir. Chris Taylor; dir. Mark Hall. 78 min. Beta, VHS. Thorn EMI/HBO.

Since Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* was first published in 1908, it has become a bedtime standard, charming children (and many grownups) with genteel adventures of talking animals: Mole, Rat, Badger, and the irrepressible Toad of Toad Hall. Grahame was apparently an old-fashioned type who mourned the changing times in which he lived, and his tale is a testimonial to fair play, friendship, and the beauties of the country.

All these qualities are captured in Thames Television's stop-motion version,



The Autobiography  
Of Miss Jane Pittman





released as part of Thorn's "Children's Matinee" series. It begins with idyllic shots of the English countryside and is soon following the shy Mr. Mole as he encounters the resourceful Ratty, in love with "The River," the eccentric country squire Toad, the knowledgeable but crusty Badger, and the frightening Weasels who inhabit the forest and menace the country folk. The narrative revolves around Toad's misadventures in motor cars—younger children will enjoy the crackups, chases, and mayhem that result. They'll also probably be a little scared by Mole's journey into "Wild Wood," eerily blanketed by a bluish light and menacing creatures.

They might not enjoy the incessant talking, however, in which Grahame's concern for traditional values is articulated. Or as Ratty puts it: "It's my world. I don't have any other. What it hasn't got isn't worth having, and what it doesn't know isn't worth knowing." It's a very upper-class British sentiment in a very upper-class British production; predictably, lower-class cockneys are the villains.

The stop-motion is wonderfully handled—when the animals break into song and dance, as they occasionally do, they have a fluidity many screen humans lack—and the models themselves are as lovely as the original characters in the book. Kenneth Grahame himself would probably have enjoyed this *Wind in the Willows*, even as he would have denounced video as an unnatural toy.

The whole show is prettily photographed. Sound is excellent and colors are soft, befitting an idyl. —Tom Soter

**The Cat in the Hat/  
Dr. Seuss on the Loose  
The Lorax/  
The Hooper-Bloob Highway**

Color. 1977, 1984. 51 min. ea. Beta, VHS \$29.98 ea. Playhouse.

Dr. Seuss arrived in the '50s to lure the first TV generation back to books. Now he's helping the first VCR generation learn to tell quality video from junk. These lively, colorful animated versions of his stories are good enough to make kids want to read the originals—I hope.

The first volume (many will follow, in-

cluding the grand *Grinch Who Stole Christmas*) offers four tales. The first is a famous bit of nonsense, "The Cat in the Hat" (voice by Allan Sherman). Following that is a morality tale about "Sneetches," two different races of 'em, who battle ludicrously over who is superior. "Put your snoot in the air," an elder Sneetch teaches its child, "and don't forget to snort" when an inferior goes by. Kids will get the painless message here and in the following fable about stubbornness, "The Zax." The finale is the whimsical gem "Green Eggs and Ham." Parents usually insist kids try food that's good for them—but here, little Sam I Am wheedles an old grouch to try this unlikely dish. Would you? "In a house/with a mouse?" Or "in a box/with a fox?"

All the stories are stylish, and the literature rhymes are a panacea for the media-speak kids get in dangerously large doses. Dr. Seuss' work recalls past masters of nonsensical mirth from Edward Lear to Rube Goldberg. The animation vividly creates a beguiling world of improbable creatures and machines. The very normal kids (who never comb their hair) fit right in.

Volume Two is more serious. The cute "Lorax" can't stop a factory owner from cutting down all the trees in the forest and chasing away the wildlife. Soon the landscape is a smokey ruin, the river a polluted swamp. The message is that "UNLESS" things change, the new generation will inherit a junk heap. Kids may feel sad and helpless at first, but this is a necessary lesson in environmentalism. The second story, "Hooper-Bloob Highway," takes a comical look at what awaits kids as they start on life's highway (baffling school lessons, too-short summer vacations, a missing tooth or two). It points out that life has pleasures as well as pitfalls, and the challenge will be an exciting one. Both are certainly modern stories—but their colorful characters and lighthearted songs maintain the spirit of fantasy. —Ron Smith

**The Rhythmatis**

Color. 1985. Stewart Copeland, Tisch Raye. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. A&M.

If this were a science fiction program with rocket ships and weird alien creatures, its premise would be far less offen-

sive. *The Rhythmatis* is the romantic quest of Stewart Copeland, polyrhythmic master of the Police, into Africa, land of rhythm. Blonde, sincere, and armed with a digital sampling recorder, Copeland encounters the funky savages of the Masai, Samburu, and other tribes and records their spontaneous joyful beats. Along the way he finds romance with a beautiful blonde woman and happy Africans gleefully invite the stranger to party down with them. It sounds like a perfect vehicle for rock's most international drummer to put some chops on tape and move even closer to a blending of African and Euro-American sounds. Instead *The Rhythmatis* is about as much of a cultural crossover as the safari movies of the '50s.

Though Copeland stands in awe of the tribes' control of complex rhythms, he portrays the tribespeople as jolly primitives with no earthly concerns other than beating on drums, dancing, painting themselves, and carrying spears. Where the video could clear up some stereotypes, it indulges in them. An inadvertent flash of a wristwatch onscreen belies a technological assimilation Copeland never acknowledges. The Africans seem fascinated with his electronic gadgets. Copeland ignores the African cities except to disrupt the ritual solemnity of the Ramadan holiday in the Islamic north. And he burdens himself with an embarrassing script: "I've come to the last beat of the penultimate bar and I have to be ready for the big downbeat."

In its defense, the video offers stunning safari footage and some incredible beats. But it is a quest for understanding in which the seeker never takes off his blinders. Me, I'll listen to the records of King Sunny Ade, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Malopoets, Toure Kunda, Manu Dibango, Mandingo, and others to get a greater understanding of how African rhythm fits into the modern world. Copeland's romantic primitivism ultimately boils down to condescension. The





Police's pan-ethnic grooves worked because the musicians never pretended to be African or Jamaican or whatever. I never would have guessed it was because they thought they were better.

—John Leland

## BackAids

*Color. 1985. David Lehrman, M.D. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$33.45. Medical Prods. Inc. (1680 Michigan Ave., Suite 1000, Miami Beach, Fla. 33139; 1-800-528-6060).*

## Say Goodbye to Back Pain

*Color. 1985. Alexander Melleby, M.S. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Westwood Productions (10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 915, L.A., Calif. 90024; 213-470-9779).*

The problem with *BackAids* is that the point remains unclear. Is it an aerobic plan that's safe for people prone to back problems? Does it claim to relieve back pain? Or is it a glorified exercise tape finding favor among back-pain sufferers—a formidably large audience?

The music is too brisk and the exercises too quickly paced to be appropriate for people with serious or chronic back problems. A few of the exercises—the pelvic tilt for example—will certainly relieve some tension in the lower back, but Dr. David Lehrman doesn't give the whole story on back pain. In the first 60 seconds (the only explanatory section) he explains that back problems are caused in large part to getting older—pure wear and tear on the spine. If you are prone to back pain, but don't want to just sit around complaining about it, you can try this tape—but execute the exercises carefully.

If *BackAids* is smooth, slick, and gimmicky, *Say Goodbye to Back Pain* is the opposite—slow, methodical, and clearly designed to help solve back problems. It's



a big task considering that 16 million doctor visits a year are prompted by complaints of back pain. Alexander Melleby, M.S., National Director of the YMCA's Healthy Back Program, gives a good 15-minute talk on why back pains occur: tension, lack of exercise, and a sedentary life. Unfortunately, video is not Melleby's forte. His stiff and stilted on-camera personality hardly makes for easy viewing. It might have been better to save Melleby's hypnotic drone for the relaxation exercises he leads later in the tape and put all of the information in booklet form.

*Say Goodbye* promotes relaxation exercises for two weeks, twice a day, before getting into the more difficult stretches and strengtheners. It's a tightly constructed six-week program with a simple philosophy: your back carries every tension from your mind and body, and nothing will help a back whose owner can't relax.

—Julia Lisella

## Interview Techniques And Resume Tips For the Job Applicant

*Color. 1985. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95 + \$3.75 S&H for mail orders. Bennu Productions (165 Madison Ave., N.Y.C. 10016).*

Is your employer into leather? How about silks? If he isn't, he probably should be, judging from the choices offered in this tape—a sometimes hilarious, sometimes helpful look at what you should and should not do during job hunts.

The "should nots" are demonstrated at the top, with a fairly amateurish staging of an employment interview in which a Felix Unger type cross-examines an Oscar Madison-like applicant. The sound is pretty bad here, and the acting worse, but the points made are good. You are told that "flashy items may distract the interviewer and interrupt his thought patterns"—so keep that jewelry to a minimum. Too much makeup is bad too; so is smoking (unless you use a breathalyzer) and sweaty palms. If you sweat, bring a handkerchief (but be careful with the cologne). One-hundred percent leather belts are a must. So are

100-percent silk ties, 100-percent leather briefcases, and 100-percent wool pin-stripes in grey or navy blue.

Throughout you are told to be "the navigator of your own interview," and to do that you are offered pointers on how to prepare a resume (on 100-percent bond paper through a resume service), how to research a job before the interview (even how to research the interviewer), how to speak (in a politely forceful singsong), and how to sit (be careful about crossing those legs—"There's nothing worse than exposing hairy ankles").

It's a "Hints from Heloise" affair, the nadir being a "You Are There" interview sequence in which the camera walks into the room as your eyes and ears and you must answer the questions of the interviewer. Nonetheless there are some useful suggestions (emphasize your strengths, never criticize your previous employer) and those who are interested in a taped lecture might want to check this out. But those who want an imaginative video that shows rather than tells will prefer to pass—or read the book.

—Tom Soter

## You Can Win

*Color. 1985. Dr. Tess Albert Warschaw (host). 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MCA.*

John Lennon once wrote that "There are no problems, only solutions." The makers of *You Can Win*, a video guide to success through collaboration, would probably agree. The tape is a well-staged examination of the merits of the "win-win" philosophy as postulated by Dr. Tess Albert Warschaw. She is the advocate and (monotonous) host of the show, which illustrates concepts of successful negotiation in a series of amusing and well-conceived vignettes covering a wide range of topics: asking for a raise, avoiding family crises, getting the job assignment you want, solving problems of the heart (and the bed).

Warschaw discusses six different negotiating categories—"The Dictator," "The Jungle Fighter," "The Silhouette," "The Big Mama," "The Soother," and "The Win-Win"—which are then personified in a series of scenes covering different areas (money, sex, family). A "Dictator," for instance, is direct and intimidating and must have his own way, as shown in one mini-drama where he demands his restaurant table now or else. "The Soother," on the other hand, would rather avoid conflicts, while "The Big Mama" gets her way by cajolery, flattery, and bribes. All are unhappy at one time or another, though, because they cannot always win—and when they do, they make enemies. The whole point is collaboration—to know why you and others operate the way you do and then, as Warschaw puts it, "find ways to win in which nobody loses."

The tape has charm, grace, even humor, and transforms what could have been a dull lecture on the power of persuasion into an informative and entertaining story about people. It's helped by good writing and acting, imaginative camera setups, and sharp colors. *You Can Win* and "win-win" might not get you everything you want, but it could eliminate some of the mysteries of why you do what you do. And in this neurosis-ridden age of competition through destruction, that's nothing to scoff at.

—Tom Soter



# QUICK TAKES/VIDEO

## Jazz Ball

*B&W. Compiled 1958. Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Jimmy Dorsey, Sammy Davis Jr., Peggy Lee, Buddy Rich, Rudy Vallee, Roy Eldridge, Betty Hutton, Gene Krupa, Artie Shaw, Duke Ellington, Mills Bros., Lawrence Welk, others; dir. various. 60 min, Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Spotlight (12636 Beatrice St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90066). Reproduction: A*

Jazz is a "perpetual orgy," according to the unblushing narrator of this scrapbook of performances from the '30s and '40s. The revelry is more controlled than that description suggests, but *Jazz Ball*—originally produced for television in 1958—entertains better than many modern clip compilations. Cab Calloway has been mercilessly overexposed elsewhere. However, other performances make this video a treat. Armstrong croons and sings "Shine" in a leopardskin getup; Vallee and his Connecticut Yankees show the look and sound of pop-jazz in the early '30s; and the Mills Brothers make their vocal quartet sound like a full band. Lawrence Welk and his organist try to swing. Instead they provide comic relief.

—Andrew Roblin

## The Crusaders Live: Midnight Triangle

*Color. 1985. Wilton Felder, Joe Sample, Stix Hooper; dir. Makoto Haregawa. 52 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MCA.*

Connoisseurs, your ship has come in. Although there's a touch of distortion during audio peaks and an occasional lighting miscue, most of the sounds and sights in *Midnight Triangle* come across with stunning fidelity and precision. As for the Crusaders, they don't play a bad note or a sloppy lick in the entire show. The group's improvisations—especially on "Sunshine of Your Eye"—are as perfect as their arrangements, and the video conveys the second-by-second tension of their creativity. The confection may prove too sweet for palates used to cruder entertainments, but gourmets will revel in it.

—Andrew Roblin

## Kool & the Gang—Tonight!

*Color. 1985. Dir. Jay Dubin. 84 min. LV. \$24.95. Pioneer.*

As in the Vegas show captured on 1981's *Kool & the Gang Live in Concert* cassette, lead vocalist James "JT" Taylor once again guides the ensemble through a sort of mayonnaise funk—tasty, but not really filling or nutritious. Director Dubin supplies the feeling of spaciousness any nine-piece band needs, and though he's pedestrian, he gets the Gang in all its choreographed glory. But, y'know, the Temptations they're not.



Audio quality of this first digitally encoded videodisc is stunning even on my analog system. And even on a plain ol' TV—not a monitor—the laser picture definition is so much more intense than videotape's that you could tell through sunglasses.

—Frank Lovece

## Australia Now

*Color. 1985. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Media.*

Rock tapes shouldn't look as if they've been put together by tourism boards. This compilation accordingly suffers from being more about Australia than about rock. These clips and snippets of 15 bands are mostly of performances and landscapes, with clean-cut groups making it clear why Olivia Newton-John and the Little River Band became Australian stars. A harder-rocking handful is disappointingly tame; the much-hyped *Midnight Oil* is far less semilegendary than you might expect. The most affecting bit is ironically the most Australian: the urban-aboriginal reggae band No Fixed Address, whose lyrics defy last century's slaughter and this century's bigotry against Australia's natives.

—Frank Lovece

## Take Five

*Color. 1985. Mylon LeFevre, Amy Grant, Randy Stonehill, Michael W. Smith, Leon Patillo. 22 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Myrrh (Box 1790, Waco, Tex. 76796; 817-772-7650).*

What's a Christian music video? Is it Jimmy Swaggart mixed with Prince? Nope. Is it Oral Roberts crossed with David Lee Roth? Hardly. Christian music videos blunt the evangelical fervor of the TV preachers with lyrics and visuals that yield their religious themes only under scrutiny. Some, like Amy Grant's "It's Not a Song," appear to have no connection with Christianity at all. Others, like Leon Patillo's "Love Calling," attempt to seduce the viewer with *Star Trek*-y spaciness to get the message across. Everything in this collection is well-directed, if not exactly inspiring.

—Andrew Roblin

## How to Pick Up Men

*Color. 1984. Dr. Elliott B. Jaffa. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.*

What would Helen Gurley Brown be like as a man? Probably something like Dr. Jaffa, who considers himself officially "tuned in to single women's number-one problem—meeting men." His solution? First, convince yourself that life is dull, desolate and useless without a man—*any* man. In the name of women's liberation and female assertiveness, Dr. Jaffa will teach you how to enter a room smiling ("Miss Sunshine" is in, girls, "Miss Doom and Gloom" is out), how to keep your mouth shut when the man of your dreams is telling you his life story (even if it is about how he rose to the top in his insurance company), and how to go for the close (don't be too eager, the man might think you're desperate).

—Julia Lisella

## What Every Child Should Know

*Color. 1985. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. AVG (1 Charles St., Providence, R.I. 02904).*

Using video as an educational tool has often been talked of but too rarely put into action, so it's good to see the medium finally applied to so worthy a cause in this and similar tapes. Scored and cowritten by *Fame*'s Albert Hague, *What Every Child Should Know* takes a tip from *Sesame Street* and turns encouraging child safety and preventing child abduction into a game via singalongs, an accompanying exercise book, and imaginative use of computer graphics. Though a trifle cute, it should interest small children yet not be too long for parents to tolerate. A worthwhile project and a good buy.

—Steven Grant

## The Grand Canyon

*Color. 1984. Dir. Norman Berger. 115 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Norman Berger Productions (3217 S. Arville St., Las Vegas, Nev. 89102).*

What hath *Koyaanisqatsi* wrought? Norman Berger's aerial tour of the Grand Canyon—a different sort of documentary—covers 200 miles in 2 hours, with vistas ranging from the mundane to the spectacular. Absence of narration makes the enclosed map a little hard to follow, and VHS reproduction washes out some of the spectacular colors—but the awe and sensuality of the landmark come through. Though static, the result is so peaceful and quietly fascinating it could undermine all our concepts of television. Apparently this is the first in a series, but what do you top the Grand Canyon with? The moon?

—Steven Grant



# DIRECTORY

## New Releases on Tape and Disc

Cartoon fans of the world, rejoice—this month's "Directory" contains a whopping 42 animated entries! The success of Disney's "Limited Gold Edition" series, along with the release of once untouchable classics like *Pinocchio*, has prompted other distributors to follow suit. Warner enters the fray with nine collections of vintage cartoons. The best work of vocalist Mel Blanc and directors Chuck Jones and Friz Freleng has been assembled into special *Salutes* featuring a cross-section of Warner Brothers cartoon stars. Six more compilations highlight individual characters. There are no cuts, no commercials, no scratched prints, no paste-ups of old and new animation—so enjoy. Kudos also to Pacific's *Everybody Rides the Carousel*, a decidedly non-juvenile TV special produced by the Pulitzer-prize winning team of John and Faith Hubley. Pacific also offers two *Sherlock Holmes* adaptations, while Family releases two Chuck Jones TV programs based on Kipling stories, *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* and *Mowgli's Brothers*.

Classics continue to appear in droves, but watch out for incomplete versions of your favorite films. RKO has issued twelve titles under the umbrella "The Dazzling Dozen," claim-

ing these are "uncut, mint 35mm theatrical prints." Check the running time of its *King Kong*, however, and you'll find it's the theatrical re-release version, cut by three minutes. *The Thing* has also been shorn of 6 or 7 minutes out of an original 87. Complete and unscathed are *Gunga Din* (1939) and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1939) from RKO, and *That Hamilton Woman* (1941), *Barbary Coast* (1935) and *The Pygmalion* (1938) from Embassy.

Two new distributors appear in this issue. Magic Window, formed by RCA/Columbia to showcase children's programming, boasts a toy with every tape. *Beany and Cecil Volume 8* has a hand puppet, *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe Volume 12* comes with a battery-powered toothbrush (but no battery), and *Heathcliff and Cats & Company* is accompanied by a feline-embossed china set. Hal Roach Studios bows with a newly "colorized" version of *Topper* (1937), and will release other enhanced black-and-white comedies in coming months.

With the schedule of new releases rapidly approaching deluge level, The Collector must wait in the wings for another month—but it *will* be back, honest.

## ADVENTURE

**The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.** Color. 1973. Buddy Ebsen, Jane Wyatt, Vic Morrow, John McGiver, Josh Albee, Jeff Tyler. Adaptation of Mark Twain novel: life on the Mississippi. 76 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$39.95. MCA.

**B.A.D. Cats.** Color. Asher Brauner, Steve Hanks, Jimmie Walker, Michelle Pfeiffer. Auto policemen on gold theft case. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

**Ballad of a Gunfighter.** Color. 1964. Marty Robbins, Bob Barron, Joyce Redd. Lone gunman vs. ringleader of robbery gang. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**Barbary Coast.** B&W. 1935. Walter Brennan, Miriam Hopkins, Edward G. Robinson, Joel McCrea, Frank Craven, Brian Donlevy, David Niven; dir. Howard Hawks. San Francisco in the 1800s. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Battle Hell.** B&W. 1956. Richard



Todd, Akim Tamiroff, Keye Luke. British warship runs aground in Yangtse River during Chinese Civil War. 113 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VidAmerica.

**Battle of Valiant.** Color. Gordon Mitchell, Ursula Davis, Max Serato. Soldiers of Rome vs. barbarian mercenaries. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**The Chinese Stuntman.** Color. Ho Chung Tao, John Ladalski, Dan

Inosanto. An American in Hong Kong: martial arts. 85 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. TWE.

**Capkillers.** Color. Jason Williams, Bill Osco. Two men vs. police in protracted gun battle. 93 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. TWE.

**Duel of Champions.** Color. 1961. Alan Ladd, Franca Bettoja, Franco Fabrizi, Robert Keith, Luciano Marin. Roman nobleman

battles brothers for empire. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Duel of the Brave Ones.** Color. Chan Wu Lang, Tony Wai Shing. Search for jewel thieves: martial arts. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. TWE.

**El Cid.** Color. 1961. Charlton Heston, Sophia Loren, Raf Vallone, Genevieve Page, Hurd Hatfield. Eleventh-century Spanish hero repels Moor invasion. 187 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**The Executioner of Venice.** Color. Guy Madison, Lex Barker, Sandra Panaro. Adriatic pirates plunder ships of Venetian Republic. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Fists of Fury II.** Color. 1980. Bruce Lee, Ho Chung Do, Ju Phong, Tong Yim Chen. Martial arts master avenges harassed family. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Gems.

**Fort Apache.** B&W. 1948. John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Shirley Temple, John Agar, Ward Bond; dir. John Ford. Cavalry officers differ on Indian combat strategy. 127 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.



**Faur Faces West.** B & W. Joel McCrea, Frances Dee, Charles Bickford, Joseph Calleia. Horseman robs bank to stop foreclosure on father's ranch. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Spotlite.

**Goliath and the Barbarians.** Color. 1960. Steve Reeves, Bruce Cabot, Giulia Rubini, Chelo Alonso, Arturo Dominici, Gino Scotti. Warrior holds off invading forces. 86 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MGM/UA.

**Gungo Din.** B&W. 1939. Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Victor McLaglen, Sam Jaffe, Joan Fontaine; dir. George Stevens. Kipling's regimental heastie. 117 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**Heroes in Hell.** Color. Klaus Kinski, Ettore Manni. WWII pilots escape from concentration camp, plan capture of German officer. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Hunter.** Color. James Franciscus, Linda Evans, Broderick Crawford. TV pilot: ex-con on trail of millionaire who framed him. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

**Island of the Blue Dolphins.** Color. 1964. George Kennedy, Celia Kaye, Larry Domasin, Ann Daniel. Young Indian girl marooned on remote Pacific island. 99 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

**The Jungle Master.** Color. Johnny Weissmuller, Simone Blondell, Edward Mann. Expedition to depths of African wilds. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Kentucky Rifle.** Color. 1955. Chill Wills, Lance Fuller, Jeanne Cagney. Wagon train crosses Indian territory. 80 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**King Kong.** B&W. 1933. Robert Armstrong, Fay Wray, Bruce Cabot, Frank Reicher, Sam Hardy, Victor Wong. Special effects by Willis O'Brien; Max Steiner score. Film director and crew capture giant simian. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**Knights of the Round Table.** Color. 1953. Robert Taylor, Ava Gardner, Mel Ferrer, Stanley Baker, Felix Aylmer. Romantic betrayal in King Arthur's court. 115 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**The Legend of Black Thunder Mountain.** Color. 1979. Bear cares for two children after father's kidnapping. 90 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Continental.

**Man of Violence.** Color. 1971. Michael Latimer, Luan Peters. London mobsters search for vanished Arab gold cache. 107 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**The Morauers.** B&W. 1947. Hopalong Cassidy (William Boyd), Rand Brooks, Andy Clyde. Gang terrorizes local church. 64 min.

Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Buena Vista.

**Mighty Joe Young.** B&W. 1949. Robert Armstrong, Terry Moore, Ben Johnson, Frank McHugh, Douglas Fowley, Regis Toomey. Domesticized ape put in demeaning nightclub show breaks loose. 94 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**Mission Corburi.** Color. 1977. Giuliano Gemma, Tina Aumont. One man's fight against Nazis. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Media.

**Mr. Rabinsan Crusoe.** B&W. 1932. Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., William Farnum, Earle Browne, Maria Alba. Playboy wagers he can last a month on island. 75 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**The Moon-Spinners.** Color. 1964. Hayley Mills, Eli Wallach, Pola Negri, Peter McEnery, Joan Greenwood, Irene Papas. Two young tourists expose jewel smugglers. 118 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Disney.

**The Mothers.** Color. 1976. Jayne Kennedy. Band of pirate women in



Island of the Blue Dolphins

South American jungle. 82 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Continental.

**9 Deaths of the Ninjo.** Color. 1985. Sho Kosugi, Brent Huff, Emelia Lesniak, Regina Richardson. Martial arts commandoes rescue political prisoners from kidnappers's jungle stronghold. 93 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Media.

**Out of Control.** Color. 1985. Martin Hewitt, Betsy Russell, Jim Youngs. Wealthy high schoolers stranded on island, terrorized by gang of smugglers. 78 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$69.95./LV. \$34.95. New World.

**The Peoce Killers.** Color. 1971. Clint Ritchie, Michael Ontkean,

Jesse Walton, Paul Krokop, Darlene Duralia. Bikers invade commune. 86 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS. \$59.95. New World.

**Pirates of the Seven Seas.** Color. Steve Reeves, Jacqueline Sassard, Andrea Bosis. Princess engages pirate leader to rescue imprisoned father. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Run, Rebecca, Run.** Color. 1981. Simone Buchanan, Henri Szeps. Man and girl stranded on island. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. VidAmerica.

**Scott of the Antorctic.** Color. 1948. John Mills, Derek Bond, Robertson Justice, Kenneth More. British explorer's expedition to sub-continent. 110 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. World.

**Secret Agent #2.** B&W. 1966. Patrick McGoochan, Lelia Goldoni, George Mikell. "Fair Exchange": episode of *Secret Agent* TV series. 50 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MPI.

**The Shodow of Chikara.** Color. 1977. Joe Don Baker, Sondra Locke, Ted Neeley, Slim Pickens. Ex-Confederate Army captain searches for diamond treasure. 96 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS. \$69.95./LV. \$34.95. New World.

**She Wore o Yellow Ribbon.** Color. 1949. John Wayne, John Agar, Joanne Dru, Harry Carey, Jr., Ben Johnson, George O'Brien, Mildred Natwick, Victor



McLaglen; dir. John Ford. Cavalry officer puts off retirement to fight Indians. 93 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**Showdown at Boot Hill.** B&W. 1958. Charles Bronson, Fintan Meyler, Robert Hutton, John Carradine, Carole Matthews. Deputy marshalls guns down outlaw, tries to collect reward. 72 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Spotlite.

**Silent Conflict.** B&W. 1948. Hopalong Cassidy (William Boyd), Rand Brooks, Andy Clyde. Hopalong's sidekick Lucky falls under influence of evil medicine man. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Buena.

**Steelyord Blues.** Color. 1973.

Jane Fonda, Donald Sutherland, Peter Boyle, Garry Goodrow, Howard Hesseman, John Savage. Gang of nonconformists restore vintage airplane. 93 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

**A Taste of Deoth.** Color. 1977. John Ireland, Betsy Bell. Small village overrun by cattle thieves. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Mega.

**Thunder Warrior.** Color. 1985. Mark Gregory, Bo Svenson. Young American Indian reacts to brutality of local authorities. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. TWE.

**Tiffany Jones.** Color. 1975. Anouska Hempel, Ray Brooks. Jet-set model involved in international intrigue. Based on British comic strip. 90 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**Trap on Cougar Mountain.** Color. 1972. Erik Larsen, Keith Larsen, Karen Steele. Lonely boy fights to protect pet cougar. 97 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS. \$59.95./LV. \$34.95. New World.

**20,000 Leagues Under the Seo.** Color. 1954. James Mason, Kirk Douglas, Paul Lukas, Peter Lorre, Robert J. Wilke, Carleton Young; dir. Richard Fleischer. Adaptation of Jules Verne novel: shipwreck survivors taken aboard submarine of Captain Nemo. 126 min. (G) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby stereo). \$79.95 (reissue; replaces mono versions). Disney.

**The Warning.** Color. 1980. Martin Balsam, Giuliano Gemma. Police investigation of alliance between European banks and the underworld. 101 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Media.

**Wild Gypsies.** Color. 1969. Gayle Clarke, Laurel Welcome. Renegade gypsy seeks revenge against lover's killers. 85 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95./LV. \$34.95. New World.

## COMEDY

**Alvin Purple.** Color. 1973. Graeme Blundell, George Whaley, Jack Weaver, Penne Hackforth Jones, Abigail. Exploits of a waterbed salesman. 97 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95./LV. \$34.95. New World.

**The Bellboy.** B&W. 1960. Jerry Lewis, Alex Gerry, Bob Clayton, Sonny Sands, Milton Berle, Walter Winchell; dir. Jerry Lewis. Accident-prone attendant at Miami Beach hotel. 72 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**The Best of Constid Camera.** Color. 1985. Host Allen Funt, Woody Allen, Angie Dickinson, Loni Anderson, Buster Keaton, Robby Benson. Compilation. 56 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Vestron.

**Boob Tube.** Color. 1975. John Al-



derman, Sharon Kelly, Lois Lane, Paxton Quigley. Programming day at TV station KSEX. 74 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Gems.

**Boom in the Moon.** B&W. Buster Keaton, Angel Grassa, Virginia Serrett. Shipwrecked American GI lands in Mexico after close of WWII, pressed into service aboard experimental rocket. 83 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

**Cinderfello.** Color. 1960. Jerry Lewis, Ed Wynn, Judith Anderson, Anna Maria Alberghetti, Henry Silva, Count Basie; dir. Frank Tashlin. Twist on oft-told fairy tale. 91 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**Desperate Women.** Color. 1978. Susan St. James, Renee Blakely, Ann Dusenberry, Dan Haggerty, Max Gail. Female prisoners abandoned in desert join forces with aging gunman. 98 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**Don Rickles: Buy This Tape, You Hockey Puck.** Color. 1975. Don Rickles, Jack Klugman, Don Adams, Michele Lee. Revue featuring songs, skits, celebrity appearances. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Lightning.

**Ellie.** Color. 1983. Sheila Kennedy, Shelley Winters, Edward Albert, Pat Paulsen, George Gobel. Widow with long list of departed husbands tries to add one more. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron.

**Female Trouble.** Color. 1974. Divine; dir. John Waters. Cult film focuses on mugger/prostitute/murderess played by 300-pound transvestite Divine. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Continental.

**Froternity Vocation.** Color. 1985. Stephen Geoffreys, Sheree J. Wilson, Cameron Dye, Tim Robbins, John Vernon. Two hipsters, nerd in Palm Springs. 95 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (cl. cap.). \$79.95./LV. \$34.95. New World.

**Gas-s-s-s.** Color. 1979. Bud Cort, Cindy Williams, Robert Corff, Ben Vereen, Talia Coppola (Shire), Elaine Giftos. Mysterious gas kills everyone over 30. 79 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Ghost in the Noonday Sun.** Color. 1973. Peter Sellers, Anthony Franciosa, Spike Milligan, Peter Boyle, Clive Revill, James Villiers. Ship's cook leads pirate crew to treasure. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VCL.

**Good Som.** B&W. 1948. Gary Cooper, Ann Sheridan, Ray Collins, Edmund Lowe, Joan Lorring, Ruth Roman; dir. Leo McCarey. Do-gooder husband gives away family fortune. 113 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Spotlite.

**Goodbye Cruel World.** Color.

1982. Dick Shawn, Cynthia Sikes, Chuck Mitchell. Harried TV anchorman decides to kill himself. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**The Horse's Mouth.** Color. 1958. Alec Guinness, Kay Walsh, Renee Houston, Mike Morgan, Michael Gough, Ernest Thesiger; dir. Ronald Neame. Eccentric painter swindles his patrons. 93 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.



**Hot Moves.** Color. 1984. Michael Zorck, Adam Silbar, Debi Richter, Monique Gabrille, Tami Holbrook. High school juniors make pact to lose their virginity. 85 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron.

**Kidco.** Color. Scott Schwartz, Clifton James. Corporation headed by larcenous twelve-year-old. 104 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**Lust in the Dust.** Color. 1985. Tab Hunter, Geoffrey Lewis, Divine, Lainie Kazan, Cesar Romero; dir. Paul Bartel. Western parody. 85 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.95. New World.

**Marriage Is Alive and Well.** Color. 1980. Joe Namath, Jack Albertson, Melinda Dillon, Judd Hirsch, Susan Sullivan, Fred McCarren, Nicholas Pryor. Wedding photographer relates matrimonial vignettes. 97 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**Only with Married Men.** Color. 1974. David Birney, Michele Lee, John Astin, Judy Carne, Dom DeLuise, Gavin MacLeod. Bachelor poses as husband to woo woman tired of single men. 74 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

**Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment.** Color. 1985. Steve Guttenberg, Bubba Smith, Dave Graf, Michael Winslow, Bruce Mahler, Colleen Camp, Art Metrano, Marion Ramsey, Howard Hesseman; dir. Jerry Paris. Recruits take on punk spray-painting gang. 87 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$79.95./LV. (CX, cl. cap.). \$34.95. Warner.

**Pygmalion.** B&W. 1938. Wendy

Hiller, Leslie Howard, Wilfred Lawson, Marie Lohr, David Tree, Scott Sunderland; dir. Anthony Asquith, Leslie Howard. Professor transforms flower girl into society woman. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Red Skelton's Funny Foces.** Color. Red Skelton, Marcel Marceau. Collection of routines with Skelton as Freddie the Freeloader, seagulls Heathcliff and Gertrude, other characters. Features Mary-

ceau in "Bip" pantomime. 53 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

**School for Sex.** Color. Derek Aylward, Rose Alba, Hugh Latimer, Cathy Howard, Sylvia Barlow. Busted ex-millionaire teaches young girls how to marry for money. 81 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. Monterey.

**The Shoggy D.A.** Color. 1976. Dean Jones, Tim Conway, Suzanne Pleshette, Keenan Wynn, Jo Anne Worley, Dick Van Patten; dir. Robert Stevenson. Candidate for D.A. transformed into talking dog. 90 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Disney.

**Snow White and the Three Stooges.** Color. 1961. The Three Stooges, Patricia Medina, Carol Heiss, Buddy Baer, Guy Rolfe, Edgar Barrier. Rewrite of the fairy tale. 108 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Hi-Fi, cl. cap.). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**Son of the Blob.** Color. 1972. Robert Walker, Richard Stahl, Godfrey Cambridge, Carol Lynley, Larry Hagman, Cindy Williams, Shelley Burman, Dick Van Patten; dir. Larry Hagman. Gelatinous monster frozen in Antarctic is accidentally defrosted. 87 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Gems.

**Still the Beaver Volume 1.** Color. 1984. Jerry Mathers, Tony Dow, Barbara Billingsley, Ken Osmond, John Snee, Eric Osmond, Kipp Marcus. New Disney cable channel series featuring original characters from TV's *Leave It To Beaver*, now with their own families. Contains episodes "Growing Pains," "Thanksgiving

Day." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Disney.

**Still the Beaver Volume 2.** Color. 1984. Jerry Mathers, Tony Dow, Barbara Billingsley, Ken Osmond, John Snee, Eric Osmond, Kipp Marcus, Kaleena Kiff. Contains episodes "Supply and Demand," "Pet Peeves." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Disney.

**Still the Beaver Volume 3.** Color. 1984. Jerry Mathers, Tony Dow, Barbara Billingsley, Ken Osmond, John Snee, Eric Osmond, Kipp Marcus. Contains episodes "Girl Talk," "The Gladiators." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Disney.

**Superdad.** Color. 1973. Bob Crane, Kurt Russell, Barbara Rush, Joe Flynn, Kathleen Cody, Dick Van Patten. Middle-aged father plays teenager to compete with daughter's fiance. 94 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Disney.

**The Sure Thing.** Color. 1985. John Cusak, Daphne Zuniga, Anthony Edwards, Boyd Gaines, Tim Robbins, Lisa Jane Persky, Viveca Lindfors, Nicolette Sheridan; dir. Bob Reiner. Collegiate couple travel cross-country to visit respective mates. 94 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**Ten From Your Show of Shows.** B&W. 1973. Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca, Carl Reiner, Howard Morris, Louis Nye, Jack Russell, Ray Drakley, Dorothy Patten, Swen Swenson, Eleanor Williams, Ed Herlihy. Sketches culled from early '50s TV program, including a malfunctioning Swiss clock, an interview with Ludwig Von Spacebrain, parodies of *From Here to Eternity* and *This Is Your Life*. 92 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Media.

**Topper.** "Colorized" (computer-enhanced B&W). 1937. Constance Bennett, Cary Grant, Roland Young, Billie Burke, Alan Mowbray, Hedda Hopper, Eugene Pallette, Arthur Lake, Hoagy Carmichael. Meek young man haunted by two ghosts. 97 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Roach.

**Up the Academy.** Color. 1980. Ron Leibman, Wendell Brown, Ralph Macchio, Tom Citera, Tom Poston, Stacey Nelkin, Barbara Bach. Rambunctious freshmen at military high school. 88 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. Warner.

**Utilities.** Color. 1983. Robert Hays, Brooke Adams. Social worker frustrated with utility companies. 94 min. (PG) CED. \$29.95. Vestron.

**Which Way to the Front?** Color. 1970. Jerry Lewis, Jan Murray, John Wood, Steve Franken, Dack Rambo, Kaye Ballard, Harold J. Stone, Paul Winchell, Sidney Miller. 96 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.



# DRAMA

**Adom.** Color. 1983. Daniel J. Travanti, JoBeth Williams, Martha Scott, Richard Masur, Paul Regina, Mason Adams. Docu-drama: parents of murdered boy lobby for federal child search funding. 100 min. Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$59.95. IVE.

**The Ambush Murders.** Color. 1982. James Brolin, Dorian Harewood, Alfred Woodard, Louis Giambalvo, John McLiam, Teddy Wilson, Antonio Fargas. White lawyer defends black activist accused of killing white policemen. 98 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$49.95. U.S.A.

**Among the Cinders.** Color. 1983. Paul O'Shea, Derek Hardwick, Rebecca Gibney, Yvonne Lawley. Australian boy comes of age after accidental death of friend. 109 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95/LV \$34.95. New World.

**And Hope to Die.** Color. 1972. Robert Ryan, Tisa Farrow, Jean-Louis Trentignant, Lea Massari, Aldo Ray; dir. Rene Clement. Gang's intended kidnap victim turns out to be dead. 95 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. Monterey.

**Angkor: Cambodia Express.** Color. 1984. Robert Walker, Christopher George. Journalist searches for Vietnamese woman he left behind. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**The Boron and the Kid.** Color. Johnny Cash, June Carter, Gregg Webb, Claude Akins, Richard Roundtree, Darren McGavin. Father and illegitimate son meet as pool shark rivals. 101 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). VHS (Hi-Fi, cl. cap.). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**Beyond Obsession.** Color. 1985. Marcello Mastroianni, Tom Berenger, Eleonora Giorgi. Mar-rakesh triangle of jailed Italian ex-diplomat, woman sharpster, American oil engineer. 116 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. VidAmerica.

**Blame It On the Night.** Color. 1984. Nick Mancuso, Byron Thames. Rock star and estranged son. 85 min. (PG-13) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.98. Key.

**The Blue Knight.** Color. 1976. George Kennedy, Alex Rocco, Glynn Turman, Verna Bloom, Michael Margotta, Seth Allen. Aging L.A. patrolman investigates killing of fellow officer. 72 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$49.95. U.S.A.

**The Boot is Full.** Color. 1981. Tina Engel, Curt Bois. Refugees fleeing Nazi Germany pose as family. 104 min. Beta, VHS (dubbed or subtitled). \$59.95. Embassy.



**Breakin' Through.** Color. 1985. Ben Vereen, Donna McKechnie, Reid Shelton. Choreographer of troubled Broadway-bound musical hires street dancers. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Disney.

**Certain Fury.** Color. 1985. Tatum O'Neal, Irene Cara, Peter Fonda. Fugitive girls flee police. 88 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS. \$79.95/LV. \$34.95. New World.

**Citizen Kane.** B&W. 1941. Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, Ruth Warrick, Ray Collins, Erskine Sanford, Everett Sloane, Alan Ladd. Rise and precipitous fall of newspaper mogul. 119 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**The City's Edge.** Color. 1983. Man recovers after father's death. 86 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MGM/UA.

**Class of '63.** Color. 1973. Cliff Gorman, Joan Hackett, James Brolin, Woodrow Chambliss, Ed Lauter, Colby Chester, Graham Beckel. Estranged husband and wife attend 10-year college reunion. 74 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

**Conrack.** Color. 1974. Jon Voight, Paul Winfield, Hume Cronyn, Madge Sinclair, Tina Andrews, Antonio Fargas; dir. Martin Ritt. Maverick teacher clashes with superintendent in remote all-black South Carolina school. 111 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**D.W. Griffith Triple Feature.** B&W. 1912-1913. Dir. D.W. Griffith. *The Battle at Elderbrush Gulch* ('13): Mae Marsh, Lillian

Gish, Chrystie Miller, Robert Har-ron, Charles H. Mailes, Kate Bruce. Two orphans accidentally trigger Indian uprising. *Iola's Promise* ('12): Mary Pickford. Indian girl's self-sacrifice. *The Goddess of Sagebrush Gulch* ('12): Girl visits sister in mining camp. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**Damien: The Leper Priest.** Color. 1980. Ken Howard, Mike Farrell, William Daniels, Wilfred Hyde-White, David Ogden Stiers, Logan Ramsey, Roger Bowen, Irene Tsu. Clergyman cares for lepers on remote Hawaiian island. 96 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**Deadly Impact.** Color. 1984. Bo Svenson, Fred Williamson, Marcia Cungan. Illegal gambling operation. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**Deadly Rivals.** Color. 1972. Scott Jacoby, Joan Hackett, Robert Klein. Woman torn between new husband and demanding son. 103 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Continental.

**Delinquent Schoolgirls.** Color. 1984. Michael Pataki, Bob Minor, Stephen Stucker. Male asylum escapees raid nearby women's correctional institute. 89 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**Dragon Seed.** B&W. 1944. Katharine Hepburn, Walter Huston, Aline MacMahon, Turhan Bey, Hurd Hatfield, Agnes Moorehead, Frances Rafferty, J. Carol Naish, Akim Tamiroff, Henry Travers. Adaptation of Pearl Buck novel: Chinese village weathers Japanese occupation. 145 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**From the Life of the Mario-nettes.** Color/B&W. 1980. Robert Atzorn, Christine Buchegger, Martin Benrath, Rita Russek, Lola Muethel, Walter Schmidinger, Heinz Bennent; dir. Ingmar Bergman. Psychological study of strained marriage. 103 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

**The Hard Port Begins.** Color. Donnelly Rhodes, Nancy Belle Fuller. Ambitious country and western singer. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. TWE.

**Heavenly Bodies.** Color. 1984. Cynthia Dale. Health club proprietress challenges competitor to televised marathon workout. 99 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.98. Key.

**The Hit.** Color. 1985. John Hurt, Laura del Sol, Tim Roth, Terence Stamp, Bill Hunter, Fernando Rey. Informer-kidnapped by hired gunman. 97 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95/LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**I Remember Mamo.** B&W. 1948. Irene Dunne, Barbara Bel Geddes, Phillip Dorn, Oscar Homolka, Cedric Hardwicke, Ellen Corby, Hope Landin, Edith Evanson; dir. George Stevens. Daughter of first-generation Norwegian immigrants reminisces. 95 min. Beta, \$29.95. RKO.

**Interface.** Color. 1984. John Davies, Laura Lane, Matthew Sacks. Players of crime-prevention computer game become vigilantes. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**The Life and Assassination of the Kingfish.** Color. 1976. Edward Asner, Nicholas Pryor, Diane Kagen, Fred Cook, Dorrie Kavanaugh, Gary Allen. Docudrama bio on Louisiana politician Huey P. Long. 96 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**Magic Town.** B&W. 1947. James Stewart, Jane Wyman, Kent Smith, Regis Toomey, Donald Meek; dir. William Wellman. Pollster finds perfect "average" town which promptly becomes extraordinary. 103 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Spotlite.

**The Magnificent Ambersons.** B&W. 1942. Joseph Cotten, Dolores Costello, Anne Baxter, Agnes Moorehead, Ray Collins, Erskine Sanford. From Booth Tarkington novel; score by Bernard Herrmann. Decline of once-wealthy family. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**The Miracle of the Bells.** B&W. 1948. Fred MacMurray, Frank Sinatra, Lee J. Cobb, Charles Meredith. Press agent carries out dying woman's wish. 120 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Spotlite.

**Missing in Action 2: The Beginning.** Color. 1985. Chuck Norris. U.S. colonel and squadron captured by sadistic Vietcong commander. 96 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.



**National Velvet.** Color. 1944. Mickey Rooney, Elizabeth Taylor, Donald Crisp, Anne Revere, Angela Lansbury, Reginald Owen, Norma Varden. Two youngsters train horse for championship race. 125 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Never on Sunday.** B&W. 1960. Melina Mercouri, Jules Dassin, Georges Foundas, Titos Vandis, Mitsos Liguissos, Despo Diamantidou; dir. Jules Dassin. Intellectual courts prostitute, tries to educate her. 94 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MGM/UA.

**Nurse.** Color. 1980. Michael Learned, Robert Reed, Tom Aldredge, Hattie Winston, Antonio Fargas, Leora Dana. TV pilot: widow resumes post as head nurse. 100 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**The Old Gun.** Color. 1976. Philippe Noiret, Romy Schneider, Jean Bouise. French farmer stalks Nazis who pillaged his castle estate, killed his wife and child. 141 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Media.

**The Ordeal of Dr. Mudd.** Color. 1980. Dennis Weaver, Susan Sullivan, Richard Dysart, Michael McGuire, Nigel Davenport, Arthur Hill. Country doctor accused of conspiring with Lincoln assassin John Wilkes Booth. 145 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

**A Passage to India.** Color. 1984. Victor Banerjee, Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Judy Davis, James Fox, Alec Guinness, Nigel Havers; dir. David Lean. Adaptation of E.M. Forster novel: Native doctor accused of raping English girl. 163 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Hi-Fi Dolby stereo, cl. cap.). \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

#### "Please Don't Hit Me, Mom."

Color. Patty Duke Astin, Nancy McKeon, Lance Guest, Sean Astin. Episode of *ABC Afterschool Special*: babysitter suspects divorced working woman of child abuse. 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

**The Ploughman's Lunch.** Color. 1983. Jonathan Pryce, Tim Curry, Rosemary Harris, Frank Finlay, Charlie Dore. Opportunistic British reporter during Falklands war. 107 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

**Puberty Blues.** Color. 1981. Nell Schofield, Jad Capelja, Geoff Rhoe, Tony Hughes, Sandy Paul; dir. Bruce Beresford. Two Australian teenage girls become surfing groupies. 86 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

**The Red Badge of Courage.** B&W. 1951. Audie Murphy, Bill Mauldin, John Dierkes, Royal Dano, Arthur Hunnicutt, Andy Devine, Douglas Dick; dir. John Huston. From the novel by Stephen

Crane: Civil War soldier deserter resolves to return to battle. 69 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Sessions.** Color. 1983. Veronica Hamel, Jeffrey De Munn, Jill Eikenberry, David Marshall Grant, Deborah Hedwall, George Coe, Henderson Forsythe. Career woman leads secret life as call girl. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VCL.

**The Slugger's Wife.** Color. 1985. Michael O'Keefe, Rebecca De Mornay, Martin Ritt, Randy Quaid, Cleavant Derricks; dir. Hal Ashby, from Neil Simon script. Atlanta Braves outfielder marries young singer. 105 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Hi-Fi Dolby stereo, cl. cap.) \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Smosh-Up, the Story of a Woman.** B&W. 1947. Susan Hayward, Lee Bowman, Marsha Hunt, Eddie Albert, Carl Esmond, Carleton Young. Alcoholic wife of



songwriter. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. World.

**Soldier of the Night.** Color. 1984. Love story set in Tel-Aviv. 89 min. Beta, VHS (dubbed). \$59.95. MGM/UA.

**Soul Hustler.** Color. Fabian Forte, Tony Russel, Casey Kasem, Nai Bonet. Con man poses as evangelist. 81 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**The Spirit of West Point.** B&W. 1947. Felix "Doc" Blanchard, Glenn Davis, Tom Harmon, Alan Hale, Jr., Anne Nagel, Robert Shayne. Heisman Trophy winners Blanchard and Davis play themselves in football saga. 77 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS. \$39.95. New World.

**Suspicion.** B&W. 1941. Joan Fontaine, Cary Grant, Cedric Hardwicke, Dame May Whitty, Heather Angel, Isabel Jeans, Auriol Lee, Regina Sheffield, Leo G. Carroll, Nigel Bruce. Husband may be plotting wife's demise. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**Talk to Me.** Color. Austin Pendle-

ton, Michael Murphy, Louise Fletcher. Chronic stutterer enters clinic, falls in love with similarly afflicted woman. 90 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Hi-Fi, cl. cap.). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**Thot Hamilton Woman.** B&W. 1941. Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh, Alan Mowbray, Sara Allgood, Gladys Cooper, Henry Wilcoxon, Heather Angel. Ill-fated romance of Britain's Lord Admiral Nelson and mistress Lady Emma Hamilton. 125 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Therese and Isobelle.** B&W. 1968. Essy Persson, Anna Gael. Schoolgirl intimates. 102 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**Thief.** Color. 1971. Richard Crenna, Angie Dickinson, Cameron Mitchell, Hurd Hatfield, Robert Webber. Businessman with police record struggles to repay gambling

troublesome deer. 134 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

## FANTASY and SCI-FI

**The Amazing Adventures of Joe 90.** Color. Supermarionation. Special glasses endow teenager with unusual powers. 90 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Family.

**The Asphyx.** Color. 1972. Robert Stephens, Robert Powell, Jane Lapotaire, Alex Scott, Ralph Arliss. Discovery of death spirit makes scientist immortal. 98 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$49.95. United.

**Beany and Cecil, Volume 8.** Color. Animated. Beany, Cecil, Dishonest John in "The Invisible Man Has Butter-Fingers," "Rin-Tin-Can," four other stories. 45 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions); comes with Cecil hand puppet. \$24.95. Magic.

**Bob the Quail.** Color. Animated. Quail searches for a tree where his family will be safe from forest dangers. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Family.

**Brain 17: The Revenge of the Defenders.** Color. Evil scientist reprograms computer for global conquest. 72 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$24.95. Family.

**Bugs Bunny's Wacky Adventures.** Color. 1949-1957. Animated; dir. Chuck Jones, Robert McKimson, Friz Freleng. With Elmer Fudd, Daffy Duck, Yosemite Sam. Includes "Long Haired Hare" ('49), "Bunny Hugged" ('51), "The Grey Hounded Hare" ('49), "Roman Legion Hare" ('55), "Hare Do" ('49), "Bully for Bugs" ('53), "Ali Baba Bunny" ('57), "Duck! Rabbit! Duck!" ('53). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 59 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**Call of the Wild.** Color. Animated; adaptation of Jack London's novel: dog drawn to Alaskan tundra. 68 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**Captain Kangaroo and Friends.** Color. Bob Keeshan as Captain Kangaroo, Dolly Parton, Joan Rivers, Phil Donahue, Mr. Greenjeans, Mr. Moose. One of 10-part "Captain Kangaroo Video Library" series. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Britannica.

**Cinema Kid Volume 1.** Color. Cartoon collection featuring "Speed Racer" and "The Mighty Hercules." 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Continental.

**Cinema Kid Volume 2.** Color. Animated. More of "Speed Racer" and "The Mighty Hercules." 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Continental.

debt. 74 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

**Tigers Don't Cry.** Color. 1981. Anthony Quinn. Male nurse abducts African president. 105 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MPI.

**The Triangle Factory Fire Scandal.** Color. 1978. Tom Bosley, David Dukes, Tovah Feldshuh, Janet Margolin, Stephanie Zimbalist, Lauren Front, Charlotte Rae. Docudrama on fatal blaze that led to stricter fire regulations, better working conditions. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

**Working Toll: The Final Chapter.** Color. 1977. Bo Svenson, Margaret Blye, Forrest Tucker, Lurene Tuttle, Morgan Woodward, Libby Boone. Mysterious death of Tennessee sheriff Buford Pusser. 113 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Lightning.

**The Yearling.** Color. 1946. Gregory Peck, Jane Wyman, Claude Jarman, Jr., Chill Wills, Margaret Wycherly, Henry Travers, Jeff York, Forrest Tucker, June Lockhart. Young boy adopts



**Daffy Duck: The Nuttiness Continues.** Color/B&W. 1937-1956. Animated; dir. Chuck Jones, Robert Clampett, Tex Avery. With Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, Elmer Fudd, Sylvester. Includes "Duck Amuck" ('53), "The Daffy Doc" ('38), "Beanstalk Bunny" ('55), "Deduce You Say" ('56), "Rabbit Fire" ('51), "Dripalongo Daffy" ('51), "The Scarlet Pump-ernickel" ('50), "Porky's Duck Hunt" ('37). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 59 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**Escape from the Bronx.** Color. 1985. Mark Gregory, Henry Silva, Valerie D'Obici, Timothy Brent. Alliance of street gangs fight death squad invasion in post-nuclear era. 82 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Media.

**The Fabulous Fleischer Folio, Volume 3.** Color. 1936-1949. Animated. Compilation of shorts includes "Cobweb Hotel" ('36), "The Stork Market" ('49), "The Little Stranger" ('36), "A Kick in Time" ('40), "Fresh Vegetable Mystery" ('39), "Farm Foolery" ('49). Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Disney.

**Fantastic Planet.** Color. 1973. Animated feature about planet where humans are kept as pets. 72 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Flash Gordon—Space Adventurer, Vol. 1.** Color. Animated. Four stories: Flash, Dale Arden and Dr. Zarkov face cybernetic robot monster, stone statue come to life, a space warp, Ming the Merciless. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Media.

**Flash Gordon—Space Adventurer, Vol. 2.** Color. Animated. Flash and his crew incite rebellion in an enslaved underground city, battle primordial men, duel with bounty hunter sent by Ming the Merciless. 59 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Media.

**The Get Along Gang.** Color. Animated. Animal characters demonstrate value of honesty, friendship, cooperation in course of scavenger hunt. Songs performed by John Sebastian. 22 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Karl.

**Gigglesnort Hotel, Volume III.** Color. Puppet characters Weird the Bellhop, Dirty Dragon, Mother Plumtree. "Fire Safety": Captain Gigglesnort conducts an inspection; "Pulling Together": cooperation helps in scaling Mt. Menace. 45 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Karl.

**He-Man and the Masters of the Universe, Volume 12.** Color. Animated. "Quest for the Sword": He-Man descends to the realm of the Rockmen. "Orko's Favorite Uncle": wicked sorcerer plots to rule Eternia. 45 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi), closed captions; comes with battery-powered He-Man toothbrush. \$24.95. Magic.

**Heathcliff and Cats & Company, Volume 1.** Color. Animated. Four cartoons based on comic strip character, including "The Great Pussini," "Chauncey's Big Escape." 45 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi), closed captions; comes with Heathcliff plate, cup, bowl. \$24.95. Magic.



**Holocaust 2000.** Color. 1978. Kirk Douglas, Agostina Belli, Simon Ward, Anthony Quayle, Virginia McKenna, Alexander Knox. Apocalyptic prophecies surround construction of nuclear plant. 101 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**The Houndcats.** Color. Animated; from Depatie-Freleng. The Houndcats foil the Raven in "The French Connection Mission," "The Perilous, Possibly Pilfered Plans Mission." 44 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. TWE.

**Huckleberry Finn.** Color. 1981. Animated. Voice of Timothy Gibbs as Huck. Life along the banks of the Mississippi. 72 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Lightning.

**Inspector Gadget, Volume 4.** Color. Animated. Voice of Don Adams as Gadget. Inventor-sleuth battles Dr. Claw and the forces of M.A.D. 90 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Family.

**It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown.** Color. 1966. Animated. The "Peanuts" gang goes trick-or-treating. Also includes "What a Nightmare, Charlie Brown," and "It Was a Short Summer, Charlie Brown." 77 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Snoopy's.

**Johnny the Giant Killer.** Color. 1972. Animated musical adventure. 62 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. World.

**Lidsville Volume 2.** Color. Butch Patrick, Charles Nelson Reilly. Episodes of Krofft TV show about young teenager who enters a land of living hats: "Fly Now, Vacuum Later," "Weenie, Weenie, Where's Our Genie?" 46 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

**The Magic of Herself the Elf.**

Color. Animated. King Thorn and his daughter Creeping Ivy plot to disturb nature's harmony. With music composed and performed by Judy Collins. 22 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Karl.

**The Man Who Could Work Miracles.** B&W. 1937. Roland Young, Ralph Richardson, Joan

min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**Puff and the Incredible Mr. Nobody.** Color. 1982. Animated. Voice of Burgess Meredith as Puff the Magic Dragon. 45 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Children's.

**The Raft Adventures of Huck and Jim.** Color. Animated. Featuring voice of Timothy Gibbs. 72 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Family.

**Rainbow Brite, Volume 2: The Mighty Monstromurk Menace.** Color. 1983. Animated. Rainbow faces Murky Dismal, his sidekick Lurky, and their dangerous creation Monstromurk. 48 min. LV. \$34.95./CED (closed captions). \$29.95. Children's.

**Rikki-Tikki-Tavi.** Color. Animated. Narrated by Orson Welles; dir. Chuck Jones. Brave mongoose fights cobras to protect British family in India. From the story by Rudyard Kipling. 30 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$19.95. Family.

**Ringo Rides West.** Color. Animated. Mouse-loving frontier cat. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MPI.

**Road Runner vs. Wile E. Coyote: The Classic Chase.** Color. 1949-1963. Animated; dir. Chuck Jones. With Bugs Bunny, Sam the Sheepdog. Includes "Fast and Furry-ous" ('49), "Gee Whiz-z-z" ('56), "Operation: Rabbit" ('52), "Hook, Line and Stinker" ('58), "Zip 'n' Snort" ('61), "Ready, Woolen and Able" ('60), "Beep Beep" ('52), "To Beep or Not to Beep" ('63). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 54 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**A Salute to Mel Blanc.** Color. 1949-1958. Cartoon collection showcasing Blanc's vocal talents, featuring Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, Elmer Fudd, Yosemite Sam, Tweety Bird, Sylvester, Granny, Pepe Le Pew, Foghorn Leghorn; dir. Chuck Jones, Friz Freleng, Robert McKimson. Includes "Robin Hood Daffy" ('58), "Bedevilled Rabbit" ('57), "Bad Ol' Putty Tat" ('49), "Ballot Box Bunny" ('51), "Past Performance" ('55), "Little Boy Boo" ('54), "Who's Kitten Who?" ('52), "The Rabbit of Seville" ('50). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**A Salute to Chuck Jones.** Color. 1949-1960. Animated; dir. Chuck Jones. With Wile E. Coyote, Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Elmer Fudd, Pepe Le Pew. Includes "Duck Dodgers in the 24-1/2th Century" ('53), "For Scentimental Reasons" ('49), "One Froggy Evening" ('55), "Rabbit Seasoning" ('52), "High Note" ('60), "Feed the Kitty" ('52), "Zoom and Bored" ('57), "What's Opera, Doc?" ('57). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 56 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**A Salute to Friz Freleng.** Color.

Gardner, Ernest Thesiger, Wallace Lupino, George Zucco, Bernard Nedell. Shop clerk endowed with extraordinary powers. 82 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Mowgli's Brothers.** Color. Animated. Voices of Roddy McDowall, June Foray; dir. Chuck Jones. Boy raised by wolves learns about jungle code of loyalty. Based on Rudyard Kipling's "Jungle Book" stories. 25 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$19.95. Family.

**Mysterious Two.** Color. 1982. John Forsythe, Noah Beery, Vic Tayback, Priscilla Pointer, James Stephens, Robert Pine. TV pilot: alien couple come to Earth to enlist disciples. 97 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

**The Old Curiosity Shop.** Color. 1984. Animated. Young girl and grandfather evicted from store: Dickens adaptation. 72 min. (G) Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$59.95. Vestron.

**Pippi Longstocking.** Color. 1973. Inger Nilsson, Par Sandberg, Maria Perrson. Adventurous little girl. 99 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Gems.

**Porky Pig's Screwball Comedies.** Color/B&W. 1940-1952. Animated; dir. Friz Freleng, Robert McKimson, Chuck Jones. With Daffy Duck, Hubie and Bertie, Claude Cat. Appearances by producer Leon Schlesinger and storyman Michael Maltese. Includes "Curtain Razor" ('49), "Boobs in the Woods" ('50), "Often an Orphan" ('49), "You Ought to Be in Pictures" ('40), "Wearing of the Grin" ('51), "Mouse Wreckers" ('49), "Cracked Quack" ('52), "Dough for the Do-Do" ('49). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 59



1949-1958. Animated; dir. Friz Freleng. With Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Yosemite Sam, Sylvester, Tweety Bird, Granny, Speedy Gonzales. Includes "Birds Anonymous" ('57), "High Diving Hare" ('49), "Speedy Gonzales" ('55), "A Mouse Divided" ('53), "Bunker Hill Bunny" ('50), "Show Biz Bugs" ('57), "Greedy for Tweety" ('57), "Knighty Knight Bugs" ('58). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 57 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**Shari Lewis One-Minute Bedtime Stories.** Color. Shari Lewis tells 26 children's tales with help of puppet characters Lamb Chop, Charley Horse, Hush Puppy and an array of live animals. Includes "Sleeping Beauty," "Rapunzel," "Rip Van Winkle," more. Beta, VHS. \$24.95 (with read-along book, \$29.95). Worldvision.

**Sherlock Holmes and a Study in Scarlet.** Color. Animated. Voice of Peter O'Toole as Holmes. American visitor to London murdered. 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Pacific.

**Sherlock Holmes and the Valley of Fear.** Color. Animated. Voice of Peter O'Toole as Holmes. Intrepid sleuth and sidekick Watson investigate faked death of John Douglas. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Pacific.

**Speedy Gonzales' Fast Funnies.** Color. 1953-1961. Animated; dir. Friz Freleng, Robert McKimson. With Sylvester. Includes "Pied Piper of Guadalupe" ('61), "Tortilla Flaps" ('58), "Cat-Tails for Two" ('53), "Canary Woe" ('61), "Lumber Jerks" ('55), "Gonzales Tamales" ('57), "Here Today, Gone Tamale" ('59), "Tabasco Road" ('57). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 54 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**Starflight One.** Color. 1983. Lee Majors, Hal Linden, Lauren Hutton, Ray Milland, Gail Strickland, George Di Cenzo, Tess Harper, Terry Kiser, Michael Sacks, Robert Webber. Space-age airliner thrown off course. 115 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**Stories & Fables Volume 14.** Color. "The Woodcutter and the Devil": Woodsman rescues selfish troll from well. "The Talking Pony": Poor youth poses as enchanted horse. 50 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Disney.

**Stories & Fables Volume 15.** Color. "The Hired Help": Pauper teaches deceitful farmer a lesson. "Blind Beauty": Handsome youth courts difficult but beautiful girl. 50 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Disney.

**Sylvester and Tweety's Crazy Cops.** Color. 1951-1961. Animated; dir. Friz Freleng. With Granny, Spike, Sylvester, Jr. Includes "Tweet and Lovely" ('59), "Tweety and the Beanstalk" ('57), "Tree for Two" ('52), "The Last

Hungry Cat" ('61), "Mouse-Taken Identity" ('57), "Tweety's S.O.S." ('51), "Canned Feud" ('51), "Hyde and Go Tweet" ('60). Liner notes by Leonard Maltin. 57 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Warner.

**The Thief of Bagdad.** Color. 1940. Sabu, John Justin, June Duprez, Conrad Veidt, Rex Ingram, Miles Malleon, Mary Morris. Young native boy outwits evil magician. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**The Thing.** B&W. 1951. Kenneth Tobey, Margaret Sheridan, Robert Cornthwaite, Douglas Spencer, Dewey Martin, James Arness; dir. Christian Nyby. Alien loose in arctic outpost. 80 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

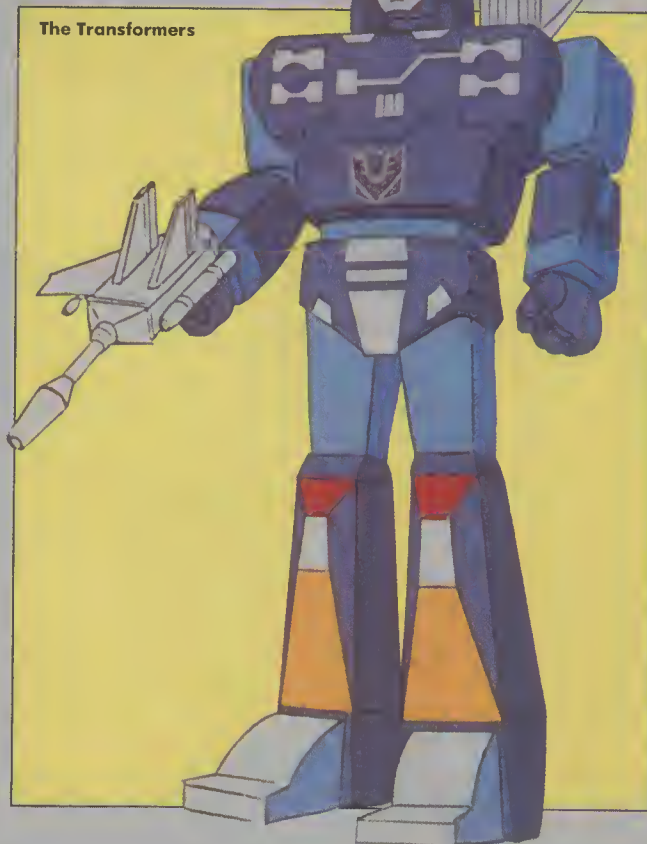
**Thunderbirds to the Rescue.** Color. Supermarionation. Members of International Rescue Organization defuse bomb planted on supersonic transport. 90 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Family.

**The Transformers: Divide and Conquer.** Color. Animated. Adventures of multi-form robots: tie-in with Japanese-made toy collection. 30 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$14.95. Family.

**The Transformers: Fire in the Sky.** Color. Animated. 30 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$14.95. Family.

**The Transformers: Roll For It.** Color. Animated. 30 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$14.95. Family.

**The Transformers: S.O.S. Dinobots.** Color. Animated. 30 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$14.95. Family.



**The Transformers: Transport to Oblivion.** Color. Animated. 30 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$14.95. Family.

**Voyager from the Unknown.** Color. 1982/1983. Jon-Erik Hexum, Meeno Peluce, Ed Begley, Jr. Time travelers meet historical figures: two episodes from the TV series. 91 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$39.95. MCA.

**Welcome to Pooh Corner Volume 5.** Color. Pooh and company in fables for pre-schoolers: "Don't Quit," others. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Disney.

## HORROR

**Asylum of Satan.** Color. 1976. Charles Kissinger, Carla Borelli, Nick Jolley. Concert pianist abducted, taken to occult stronghold. 82 min. (mature) Beta, VHS. \$49.95. United.

**Attack of the Swamp Creature.** Color. 1975. Frank Crowell, Patricia Allison, David Robertson; introduction and commentary by Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. Aquatic experiment goes awry. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Thriller.

**Blood Cult.** Color. 1985. Julie Andelman, Charles Ellis, Josef Hardt, Bennie Lee McGowan, Jim Vance. Campus killer. 89 min. (mature) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. United.

**Bloody Moon.** Color. 1985. Olivia Pascal, Christoph Bruggner, Nadji Gerganoff. Insane killer, quiet village. 84 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. TWE.

**The Brain.** B&W. 1965. Peter Van Eyck, Anne Heywood, Cecil Parker, Bernard Lee, Frank Forsyth, Jack MacGowan. *Donovan's Brain* remake: scientist keeps dead man's brain alive, finds himself controlled by it. 83 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**Cathy's Curse.** Color. 1976. Girl possessed by dead aunt murders family. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Continental.

**Cinemagic.** Color. 1985. Collection of four horror/sci-fi shorts made by independents: *Night-fright*, *Dr. Dobermind*, *Illegal Alien*, *The Thing in the Basement*. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MPI.

**Creation of the Humonoids.** Color. 1962. Don Megowan, Frances McCann, Erica Elliott, Don Doolittle. Blood-drinking robots hound survivors of atomic war. 84 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**Crypt of the Living Dead.** Color. 1973. Andrew Prine, Mark Damon, Teresa Gimpera. Denizens of Vampire Island. 81 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$49.95. United.

**Dead of Night.** Color. 1977. Ed Begley, Jr., Patrick Macnee, Anjanette Comer, Horst Bucholz, Joan Hackett, Lee H. Montgomery; dir. Dan Curtis, from Richard Matheson script. Trio of stories: a motorcar time machine, a professor's vampire wife, the return of a drowned son. Introduction and commentary by Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. 76 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Thriller.

**Doctor Phibes Rises Again.** Color. 1972. Vincent Price, Robert Quarry, Peter Cushing, Valli Kemp, Fiona Lewis, Bery Reid, Terry-Thomas, Hugh Griffith. Mad scientist obsessed with reviving dead wife. 89 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**Dracula's Great Love.** Color. 1972. Paul Naschy. Vampire hunts beautiful women. 96 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MPI.

**Friday the 13th, Part V—A New Beginning.** Color. 1985. Hockey-masked killer does away with teenage patients at secluded halfway house. 92 min. (R) Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$79.95./LV (cl. cap.). \$29.95. Paramount.

**Hounds of the Ripper.** Color. 1971. Eric Porter, Jane Mellow, Angharad Rees, Keith Bell, Derek Godfrey. Jack the Ripper's daughter.



ter becomes killer herself, undergoes psychoanalysis. 85 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. VidAmerica.

**Hatchet for a Haneymaan.** Color. Stephen Forsythe, Dagmar Lassander, Laura Betti. Bluebeard axe-murderer. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Media.

**The Hunchback of Notre Dame.** B&W. 1939. Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara, Cedric Hardwicke, Thomas Mitchell, Edmond O'Brien, Walter Hampden, George Zucco. Deformed bell-ringer Quasimodo abducts girl. 117 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**It Came From Beneath the Sea.** B&W. 1955. Kenneth Tobey, Faith Domergue, Donald Curtis, Ian Keith, Dean Maddox, Jr., Chuck Griffiths, Harry Lauter. Giant octopus attacks San Francisco. Special effects by Ray Harryhausen. 80 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Jennifer.** Color. 1978. Lisa Pelikan, Bert Convy, Nina Foch, Amy Johnston, John Gavin, Jeff Corey, Wesley Eure. Tormented high schooler exacts revenge. 90 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**Love Me Deadly.** Color. Mary Wilcox, Lyle Waggoner, Christopher Stone, Timothy Scott, William Quinn, Terry Anne Duvalis. Ghoulis mortician pursues married woman. 95 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Gems.

**The Return of the Vampire.** B&W. 1943. Bela Lugosi, Frieda Inescort, Nina Foch, Roland Varno, Miles Mander, Matt Willis. Vampire, werewolf assistant prowls streets of London circa WWII. 69 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Rude Awakening.** Color. 1981. Denholm Elliott, James Laurenson, Pat Heywood; introduction and commentary by Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. Realtor's nightmares become reality. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Thriller.

**Scared to Death.** Color. 1981. John Stinson, Diana Davidson, David Moses, Toni Jannotta, Kermit Eller. Police inspector, ex-cop track flesh-eating monster through L.A. sewers. 93 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Media.

**Schaal of Death.** Color. 1977. Dean Selmer, Sandra Mozarski. Orphanage inhabited by evil presence. 92 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. All.

**Superstition.** Color. 1982. James Houghton, Albert Salmi, Lynn Carlin. Reverend and family move into house near cursed pond. 85 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Lightning.

**Terror Beneath the Sea.** Color. 1970. Peggy Neal, Andrew Hughes, Shinichi Chiba, Mike Da-

neen, Eric Nielson. Mad scientist creates cyborg monsters in underwater lab. 85 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**13 Ghosts.** B&W. 1960. Charles Herbert, Donald Woods, Martin Milner, Jo Morrow, Rosemary DeCamp, Margaret Hamilton, John Van Dreelen; dir. William Castle. Family inherits haunted house. 88 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

**The Thirteenth Reunion.** Color. 1981. Julia Foster, Warren Clarke, Richard Pearson; introduction and commentary by Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. Plane crash survivors gather to commemorate what kept them alive. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Thriller.



**Tarture Garden.** Color. 1968. Jack Palance, Burgess Meredith, Beverly Adams, Peter Cushing, Barbara Ewing, Michael Bryant, John Standing, Robert Hutton, Maurice Denham. Four stories: "Terror Over Hollywood," an evil surgeon; "Mr. Steinway," pianist's possessive girlfriend; "Enoch," carnivorous cat; "The Man Who Collected Poe," obsessed fan. Script by Robert Bloch. 93 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Twins of Evil.** Color. 1971. Mary Collison, Madeleine Collison, Peter Cushing, Isobel Black, Harvey Hall. Depraved count and beautiful twins, one a vampire. 86 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. VidAmerica.

**Zombies of Mora Tau.** B&W. 1957. Jeff Clark, Gregg Palmer, Allison Hayes, Joel Ashley, Autumn Russell. Sunken treasure guarded by zombies. 70 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

## INFORMATION

**Barbara Woodhouse Goes to Beverly Hills.** Color. Barbara Woodhouse, with appearances by Britt Ekland, David Soul, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Elke Sommer, Lorne

Greene, Dorothy Lamour, Tippi Hedren, Stephanie Powers, Wilfrid Hyde-White, William Shatner. British animal expert demonstrates dog training techniques using stars' canines. 52 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Pacific.

**Being Different.** Color. 1985. Christopher Plummer narrates documentary about the physically handicapped. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Vestron.

**The Children of Theatre Street.** Color. Princess Grace of Monaco narrates study of Kirov School of ballet; follows young dancers through days in class, at street games, at the theatre and in dormitories. Beta, VHS (stereo). \$59.95. Kultur.

**Snawander.** Color. Top skiing spots around the world. Includes footage of Swiss Alps, volcano skiing in Mexico, helicopter skiing in Canada, snowcat skiing in Oregon. 98 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Karl.

**Victory at Sea Volume XIII: Melanesian Nightmare.** B&W. 1952. Narr. by Leonard Graves; score by Richard Rogers. The New Guinea campaign; one of 26 installments from epic NBC TV documentary. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory at Sea Volume XIV: Raman Renaissance.** B&W. 1952. Narr. by Leonard Graves; score by Richard Rogers. Sicily and the Italian campaign. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory at Sea Volume XV: D-Day.** B&W. 1952. Narr. by Leonard Graves; score by Richard Rogers. The Normandy invasion. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95/90 min. (vols. 13-15). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**Victory at Sea Volume XVI: Killers and the Killed.** B&W. 1952. Narr. by Leonard Graves; score by Richard Rogers. Victory in the Atlantic, 1943-45. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory at Sea Volume XVII: The Turkey Shaft.** B&W. 1952. Narr. by Leonard Graves; score by Richard Rogers. Conquest of the Marianas. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory at Sea Volume XVIII: Two If By Sea.** B&W. 1952. Narr. by Leonard Graves; score by Richard Rogers. Battles at Peleliu and Angaur. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95/90 min. (vols. 16-18). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War Volume 7.** Color. Narr. by Richard Basehart. "Siege." Installment in 13-part Canadian TV documentary. Interviews with Alexander Haig, General William Westmoreland, John Erlichman, others. 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

**Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War Volume 8.** Color. Narr. by Richard Basehart. "Frontline America." 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95/98 min. (vols. 7 & 8). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War Volume 9.** Color. Narr. by Richard Basehart. "Soldiering On." 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

**Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War Volume 10.** Color. Narr. by Richard Basehart. "The Village War." 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95/98 min. (vols. 9 & 10). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War Volume 11.** Color. Narr. by Richard Basehart. "Peace." 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.





**Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War Volume 12.** Color. Narr. by Richard Basehart. "Sur-render." 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

**Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War Volume 13.** Color. Narr. by Richard Basehart. "The Unsung Soldier." 49 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95./147 min. (vols. 11-13). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**The Winning Edge—Private Lessons with the Pros.** Color. Tennis instruction with John McEnroe, Ivan Lendl. Soundtrack features songs by The Police, The Cars, Pretenders. 45 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Vestron.

**Women of Iron.** Color. 1984. Deborah Diana, Carla Dunlap. Two female body-builders train for Ms. Olympia title. 45 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Continental.

**You Can Win! Negotiating for Power, Love and Money.** Color. 1983. Dr. Tess Albert Warschaw, Barry Primus, Theresa Saldana. Strategies for dealing with boss, children, spouse. 55 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MCA.

## MUSIC

**AC/DC: Let There Be Rock.** Color. 1980. Feature film of heavy metal group in Paris concert; songs include "Live Wire," "Shot Down in Flames," "The Jack," "Highway to Hell," more. 98 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$39.98. Warner.

**Art Farmer: Jazz at the Smithsonian.** Color. 1982.

Trumpeter Farmer performs "You Know I Care," "Red Cross," "Cherokee Sketches," "Recorda Me," "Blue Monk," "Firm Roots." 58 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Ashford and Simpson.** Color. "High Rise," "Street Opera." LV (8 inch, CX stereo). \$12.99. Pioneer.

**The Beach Boys: An American Band.** Color. 1985. The Beach Boys, Dan Aykroyd, John Belushi, Paul McCartney. Over 40 original songs plus a look at group's 24-year career. Includes *Saturday Night Live*, home movie segments. 103 min. (PG-13). LV. \$34.95. Vestron.

**The Beat of the Live Drum.** Color. 1985. Rick Springfield in electronically enhanced concert footage from his World Tour '84. Includes live versions of "Jessie's Girl," "Affair of the Heart," "Love Somebody," videos "Celebrate Youth," "State of the Heart," "Dance This World Away," more. 75 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Hi-Fi Dolby stereo). \$29.95. MusicVision.

**Berlin.** Color. Pop band in videos "No More Words," "The Metro," "Dancing in Berlin," more. LV (CX stereo). \$16.95. Pioneer.

**Best of Reggae Sunsplash, Part 1.** Color. 1982. Jamaica concert. Performances by Chalice, Steel Pulse, Eek-A-Mouse, Lloyd Parkes & We the People, Aswad, Burning Spear, Mutabaruka, Big Youth, Marcia Griffiths, Home T Four, Mighty Diamonds, Blue Riddim Band. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Best of Reggae Sunsplash, Part 2.** Jamaica concert. Byron Lee & the Dragonairs, Big Youth, Toots & the Maytals, Home T Four, Taj Mahal, Mutabaruka, Yellowman, Lloyd Parkes, Deniece Williams, Twinkle Brothers, others. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Bob Wilber: Jazz at the Smithsonian.** Color. 1983. Soprano saxophonist Wilber directs the Smithsonian Jazz Repertory Ensemble. "Down in Honky Tonk Town," "Summertime," "Coal Cart Blues," "China Boy," "Kansas City Man Blues," more. 59 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Sony.

**Bryan Adams—Reckless.** Color. "Run to You," "Summer of '69," "Heaven," unedited version of "This Time." LV (CX stereo). \$16.95. Pioneer.

**Buddy Barnes Live from Studio B.** Color. 1983. Concert performance by jazz pianist, with singer Sylvia Sims. "I've Been to Town," "Don't Fight It, It's Chemistry," "Colors of My Life," "Penny by Penny," more. 30 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. Sony.

**Carmen.** Color. 1984. Julia

Migenes-Johnson, Placido Domingo, Ruggero Raimondi, Faith Esham, Jean-Philippe Lafont; dir. Francesco Rosi. Film version of Bizet opera, with the National Orchestra of France conducted by Lorin Maazel. 151 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, subtitled). VHS (Hi-Fi Dolby stereo, subtitled). \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**The Cars: 1984-1985.** Color. Includes "Hello Again," "It's Not the Night," "Touch and Go," "Good Times Roll," "Moving in Stereo," "Just What I Needed," "Dream Away," "Drive," "You Might Think," "Let's Go," "Heartbeat City," more. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Music-Video.

**Chick Corea.** Color. 1982. Live concert with members of '70s jazz ensemble Return to Forever: Corea, Lenny White, Joe Henderson, Stanley Clarke. Includes "L's Bop," "Why Wait," "500 Miles High," "Guernica." 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**The Compleat Al.** Color. 1985. Fictional bio of pop satirist "Weird Al" Yankovic. Includes excerpts from MTV appearances, parodies of music videos "Beat It" ("Eat It"), "Like a Virgin" ("Like a Surgeon"), more. 97 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Hi-Fi). \$29.98. CBS/Fox.



Huckleberry Finn

**The Daars.** Color. Concert footage; songs include "Light My Fire," "L.A. Woman," "People Are Strange," more. LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**The Grateful Dead Movie.** Color. 1978. Dir. Jerry Garcia, Leon Gast. Concert performance. 131 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**Huckleberry Finn.** Color. 1974. Jeff East, Paul Winfield, Harvey Korman, David Wayne, Arthur O'Connell, Gary Merrill. Musical adaptation of Mark Twain's novel; score by Richard M. and Robert B. Sherman. 118 min. (G) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$29.98. Playhouse.

**Huey Lewis and the News: The Heart of Rock 'n' Roll.** Color. 1985. Concert recorded at San Francisco's Kabuki Theater. Songs include "Heart and Soul," "I Want a New Drug," "The Heart of Rock 'n' Roll," "If This Is It." 53 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.98. Warner.

**The Jazz Life: Mike Mainieri.** Color. 1982. Live session with Omar Hakim, Eddie Gomez, Bob Mintzer, members of Steps Ahead. Includes "Crossed Wires," "Flying Colors," "Sara's Touch," "Bamboo," "Song for Seth," "Bullet Train," "T-Bag." 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Joe Williams: Jazz at the Smithsonian.** Color. 1982. In concert with Kirk Stuart, Keeter Betts, Steve Williams. "Everyday I Have the Blues," "The Come-back," "Same Old Story," "Stella by Starlight," "But Not for Me," more. 58 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**John Waite.** Color. Collection of videos includes "Missing You," "Saturday Night," "Dream Time," "Tears," more. LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Johnny Cash—Live in London.** Color. 1981. Eighteen songs, including "Ring of Fire," "Folsom Prison Blues," "I Walk the Line." 50 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Continental.

**Johnny Winter.** Color. 1983. Legendary blues performer in Toronto concert; songs include "Rock 'n' Roll Hoochie Koo," "Johnny B. Goode," "Highway 61 Revisited," more. LV (CX stereo). \$19.95. Pioneer.

**Krokus.** Color. Swiss heavy metal group in concert versions of "Screaming in the Night," "Ballroom Blitz," more LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Live Private Dancer.** Color. Tina Turner in concert, from 1985 tour. Songs include "Show Some Respect," "What's Love Got to Do With It?," "Private Dancer," "Help," "It's Only Love" (duet with Bryan Adams), "Let's Dance"



(with David Bowie). 55 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

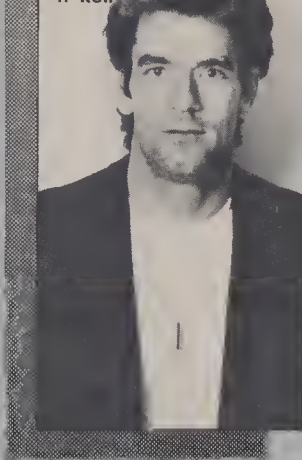
**Loverboy.** Color. 1983. Concert performance; includes "Working for the Weekend," "Turn Me Loose," "When It's Over," "The Kid is Hot Tonight," more. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$29.95. Music-Video.

**Mel Lewis: Jazz at the Smithsonian.** Color. 1982. Concert: Lewis leads jazz ensemble in "One Finger Snap," "Dolphin Dance," "Make Me Smile," "Eye of the Hurricane." 55 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Nancy Wilson.** Color. 1982. Live concert appearance with Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke, Joe Henderson, Lenny White. Includes "I Want to Be Happy," "I Get a Kick Out of You," "Round Midnight," "But Not For Me," "Yesterday," "Them There Eyes," "Take the A Train." 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Rush—Through the Camera Eye.** Color. Compilation of concert footage, 8 videos includes "Distant Early Warning," "Subdivisions," "Tom Sawyer," "Afterimage." 44

Huey Lewis and the News:  
The Heart  
of Rock  
'n' Roll



min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Hi-Fi Dolby stereo). Price N.A. MusicVision.

**Scorpions.** Color. Five-man rock band performs "Rock You Like a Hurricane," "No One Like You," "I'm Leaving You," "Still Loving You." LV (8 inch, CX stereo). \$12.99. Pioneer.

**Sheeno Easton—A Private Heaven.** Color. "Strut," "Sugar Walls," "Swear," "Back in the City." LV (8 inch, CX stereo). \$12.99. Pioneer.

**Tom Sawyer.** Color. 1973. Johnnie Whitaker, Celeste Holm, Warren Oates, Jeff East, Jodie Foster; score by Richard M. and Robert B. Sherman. Musical version of Mark Twain classic. 99 min. (G) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Hi-Fi, cl. cap.). \$29.98. Playhouse.

**Top Hat.** B&W. 1935. Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Edward Everett Horton, Helen Broderick, Eric Blore, Erik Rhodes, Lucille Ball. Astaire and Rogers dance to Irving Berlin songs "No Strings," "Cheek to Cheek," "Top Hat," more in story of mistaken identity. 97 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

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Tell," "Let's Talk It Over," more. 30 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. Jensen.

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**Yoko Ono.** Color. Yoko looks back on her life before and after John Lennon. LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**USA for Africa.** Color. 1985. Behind the scenes at the recording of the "We Are the World" album. LV (8 inch, 2 sides, CX stereo). \$14.95. Pioneer.

## SPORTS

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**Video Gems,** 731 N. La Brea Ave., Box 38188, Los Angeles, Calif. 90038 (213-938-2385).

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# Cassette Cassoulet

Have you ever wished that Julia Child would make house calls? Or Craig Claiborne? Or Paul Bocuse?

Consider it done. Unlike vinegar and oil, video and cooking mix, even if at first blush it seems an unlikely blend. Banish all thoughts of VCRs ejecting burnt toast and spaghetti fast-forwarding over the floor. Whipping up a meal through video instruction is not the nightmare it sounds like. You can combine the joy of cooking with the joy of owning a VCR. I discovered it for myself and, believe me, I'm neither a gourmet chef nor an error-proof taper.

The beauty of video cooking is that I don't have to be either. Video cookbooks are simple and abundant, and many are becoming best-sellers. After all, you eat three times a day. How often do you aerobicize, even if you're Jane Fonda? Video cookery is proliferating so rapidly that you can find a tape on almost any species of ethnic cooking you may wish to try, and on every type of dish, from guacamole to cassoulet. There's no shortage of famous chefs and food experts to hold your

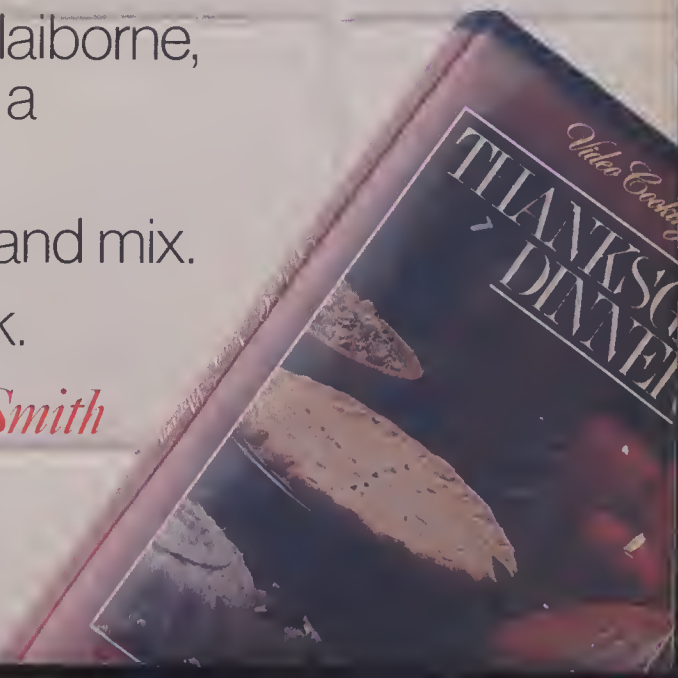
Steven Dolce

*Step 1.* Take a dash of Claiborne, one whole VCR, a pinch of Pepin.

*Step 2.* Season to taste and mix.

*Yield:* Videos that cook.

*By Ron Smith*



## Black-Eyed Peas

(from Basic New Orleans Cuisine)

- $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. dried black-eyed peas
- 3 Tbs. spicy mustard
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbs. Worcestershire sauce
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup olive oil
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup red onions, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup red pepper, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup green pepper, chopped
- 1 tsp. liquid smoke
- 4 Tbs. sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. green beans
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp. thyme
- 1 tsp. basil
- 1 tsp. oregano

1. Place peas in a deep pan and cover with water.
2. Bring to a boil, then turn heat off.
3. Let peas sit for one hour.
4. Return to heat, add bay leaf and simmer 30 minutes.
5. Place green beans and salt in boiling water.
6. Cook 3 to 4 minutes.
7. Place cooked green beans in ice water.
8. In a mixing bowl, add mustard, sugar, worcestershire, liquid smoke and vinegar.
9. Add olive oil slowly, mixing well.
10. Add onions, green peppers, red peppers and green beans.
11. Add spices to cooked peas.
12. Add peas to mixing bowl and stir.

*Yield: 4 to 6 servings.*

hand in your own kitchen as you mix and match their exotic recipes.

Beginners might try Jacques Pepin's *Guide to Good Cooking*. Food writer Craig Claiborne's *New York Times Cookbook*, Julia Child's *The Way to Cook*, and chef Paul Bocuse's *Bocuse a la Carte* have plenty of variety. Videocraft has excellent tapes on ethnic cooking, including Jane Butel's *Tex-Mex*. For dieters and those with lean wallets *The Slim Gourmet* has dozens of low-calorie delights. Giuliano Bugialli's *Guide to Italian Cooking* will satisfy sudden pasta cravings. Steven Yan's *Wok Before You Run* is a handy back-to-basics alternative to Chinese take-out. A sushi tape even comes with chopsticks.

The variety that's suddenly become available is a real treat for would-be chefs. But, I admit, I was skeptical at first. The first thing I wanted to know about how-to-cook tapes is what really goes on during the taping of the effortless-looking cooking demonstration. I've always been suspicious of video cooks. They always smile, they never make mistakes, and the dishes come out perfect. I sat in on the making of cookbook author Jane Butel's 90-minute video course in Tex-Mex cooking (from Videocraft). I came away with good news and bad news. The good news is that it's easy to cook her meals in your kitchen. The bad news? It wasn't so much fun in the studio.

Making a cooking tape is harder than making the meals. It took ten hours to film



Ron Smith



Screen cuisine: (top) Jane Butel on the set of her cooking videotape, *Tex-Mex*; (left) *Chiffonade of Lobster chez Dennis*, *Coquille St. Jacques*, *Ponte Del Isere*, and *Garides mi Feta*, from Craig Claiborne's *New York Times Cookbook*.

the 90 minute show. "Preparation is the hard part because it takes so much time," Jane said as she hunted for a wooden spoon, looking under heads of lettuce and behind a box of kosher salt. Jane was up at 5:30 a.m. and at the studio by 8:30. It took two hours to ready the cameras. The \$200 worth of food (plus cooking utensils) needed for the shoot was arranged on two huge off-camera tables so that the taping would go smoothly.

Fellow amateur chefs, we have it easy. Our kitchens don't rent for \$14 a minute. We don't have a director who makes us rehearse every movement so the camera crew will know when to switch from long-shot to close-up. Only minutes into Jane's first course, director Lee Kraft interrupted: "Don't look down lovingly at that green pepper, when you look down you've lost eye contact." And then: "Smile!" Just under the camera there was a sheet of paper with a grinning face, a subtle reminder to smile, smile, smile.

Cooking was the easiest part. Jane prepared the meals and ad-libbed all the kitchen tips and recipe steps. She never muffed a line. For ten hours she proved that even under glaring lights and stop-start technical directions, cooking can be simple. There were no outtakes where things burned, mixes failed to mix, or where the harried chef suddenly tried to lobotomize herself with a cocktail fork out of frustration. What you see on the tape is just a condensed version of what actually hap-



pened at the studio.

But the shoot *did* take ten hours. Every 15 minutes Jane stopped to watch a video replay of her performance. If the camera missed any step in the recipe, it had to be redone immediately. A few times Jane had to do close-up "inserts" showing how to chop an avocado or stir a sauce. But these were technical niceties, not steps she, you or I would have trouble with at home. It also took time for each "finished" dish to be photographed by the overhead camera, for unphotogenic spatters of sauce to be removed, and for garnishes to be artistically positioned to be "picture perfect."

Ironically, there was no time for Jane to lunch. She had to race through her dozen recipes in a single day. After each meal, the stagehands, Kraft and I would have a feast. Yes folks—everything Jane made was enthusiastically devoured. Every course was a success. But Jane barely noticed our praise. She was busy preparing the next dish. Her helper, a young woman named Beth, had to wash out the pots, pans and measuring cups over and over. Most video kitchens don't have a real sink. Behind the scenes, Beth did her washing the old-fashioned way, in buckets of soapy water on the floor. A giant black plastic trash bag received the "instructional" peeled peppers, demonstration tortillas and uncooked "Step One" sauces. On some cooking shows, I was told, such items were sent

### *Stuffed Chicken Legs with Wild Rice and Mushrooms*

(from Craig Claiborne's *New York Times Video Cookbook*)

4 boned chicken legs

2 Tbs. butter

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup finely chopped onion

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup finely chopped shallots

1 cup mushrooms cut into quarter inch cubes

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup cooked wild rice

Salt to taste, if desired

Freshly ground pepper to taste

2 Tbs. cognac

Basil leaves, truffle slices for garnish

Creamed chicken liver sauce

1. Heat butter, add onions and shallots. Cook until wilted. Add mushrooms, cook and stir for 1 min. Add wild rice, salt, pepper. Sprinkle with cognac, stir. Remove from heat and cool.
2. Stuff chicken legs with mixture. Carefully fold boned thighs to enclose filling.
3. Lay out 4 squares of plastic wrap. Place 1 stuffed leg in center of each sheet and carefully fold plastic wrap to securely enclose the stuffed pieces.
4. Place wrapped legs in 1 layer in the top rack of a steamer. Cook for 20 minutes or until done. Spoon sauce over legs, and garnish with basil leaves, truffle slices or chopped parsley.

*continued on page 150*

*Yield: 4 servings.*

### *Mincemeat Pie* (from *Thanksgiving Dinner*)

8 ozs. fresh beef suet

1 large apple

$1\frac{2}{3}$  cups each raisins, golden raisins, currants

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup each glazed lemons, oranges, pineapple

$\frac{1}{2}$  lemon

$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. each allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg

4 Tbs. brandy

2 ozs. almonds

1. In a mixing bowl, add suet, apples, raisins, currants, glazed fruits.
2. Add juice and rind of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon, allspice, nutmeg, cinnamon, brandy, almonds, and mix well.
3. Make pastry shell and top.
4. Fill pastry shell with mix.
5. Cut vents in top.
6. Lightly coat top with egg.
7. Bake in 350 degree oven for 25-30 min.

*Yield: 6 to 8 servings.*

conveniently down the toilet.

Meanwhile, unexpected problems. Kraft asked Jane, "What will the color of the finished meal be?" "Green, with flecks of red," she answered. The director held up the serving plate. "That's too close to the color of this dish. Let's find another that'll photograph better." As an afterthought he cautioned, "Don't mention prices of food. This tape will be around for years and the prices will probably change."

By the time taping ended, at 6:30, it was obvious: there had been no sorcery to the sauces, no chicanery to the chili. No camera tricks. The meals were made, and so was a new tape, yet another video cookbook for the stores. I asked Jane, who has written a dozen cookbooks, why she made the video. "When I make personal appearances people always ask me how to do things," she said. "With video you can show people how things are done. That's the most important part."

Craig Claiborne, *The New York Times'* preeminent food writer agrees. He told me there's a big difference between writing a recipe for *The Times* and doing it on video: "Recipes in a newspaper usually have to be brief and concise. You have no space. You do not embroider. On TV you can emphasize very subtle points that are eliminated in recipe writing for the printed page."

Cookbook instructions are flavorless. You're told to sift, fold, cool this, boil that, add a pinch or a dash, and it gets you nervous. You're not sure how to do it all. You figure you'll end up doing a Three Stooges routine. Doesn't separate two eggs mean put them opposite each other?

A cookbook diagram of how to slice flank steak on the bias is a poor substitute for seeing it done by a real chef. A diagram showing the proper angle for dicing an onion isn't as reassuring as seeing Jacques Pepin do it on tape, while keeping his fin-

*continued on page 147*

# ***TAKE THE CAMCORDER CHALLENGE***





# OUR TASTE TEST

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## RESULTS OF

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## FOUR LEADING

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## BRANDS...

I can think of less Herculean tasks than selecting one camcorder from among four highly regarded models. A rational man might grab a bat and try to swat a Nolan Ryan fastball or go spearfishing for Killer Whale. But the challenge was camcorders: find the best, and find out why. At the top of the line, these machines are state-of-the-art thoroughbreds. They run in a dense pack, but they're not all the same. Subtle differences reveal themselves as the machines are used. So, in a grueling long-day's-journey-into-night testing marathon, I tried the best camcorders available and came to a decision.

A single session was important because one cannot go back and recreate the exact lighting conditions nature graciously provides each day, and I wanted to set them head to head in a pure hands-on evaluation. No oscilloscopes, charts, instrumentation, or mathe-

**BY MURRAY SLOVICK**



## ... AND RCA'S NEW CONTENDER

As promised, RCA raised the stakes of the camcorder competition by introducing a Hitachi-built standard VHS cassette model. Unfortunately, the camcorder arrived two days after I concluded my camcorder test, so an examination for grade wasn't possible. Nevertheless, I wanted to run the 6.3 lb. (with cassette and battery) camcorder through its paces. The results yielded valuable insights into the design and performance of this newest entry.

There is plenty for the serious enthusiast to like in the RCA camcorder. Perhaps more than for the first-time user (it's no accident that RCA dubbed this model Pro Wonder). For starters, it has one of the best camera sections offered in any camcorder to date. The Pro Wonder uses an image tube—half-inch Saticon—combined with a fast F/1.2, 8.5-51mm, six lens optics package. The result is a picture of excellent quality and color fidelity in normal lighting and superb sensitivity at low lighting conditions. With AGC switch in gain up, to electronically increase the camera's sensitivity, the RCA camcorder produces clear and sharp images with good color tone and little color noise, under very low illumination. In low light conditions it ranks with the best separate camera components we've seen.

The beginner will find that the Pro Wonder both over-assists and under-assists him. Its credentials for Everyman include autofocus, continuous automatic white balancing with a manual white balancing dial option for adjustments using a color TV monitor, a gain up switch, power zoom lens and built-in automatic exposure control. On the other hand there is no aperture switch to compensate for scenes with

*For full report, see Videotests*



*RCA's Hitachi-built VHS camcorder, the Pro Wonder*

strong contrast such as a backlit shot (dark subject, bright background) or highlight shot (bright subject, dark background.) What's more the EVF doesn't facilitate video-making for the beginner. The only viewfinder indicator is a record lamp that doubles as a low battery level warning. There is no provision for the operator to see in the viewfinder at a glance the major camera settings like AGC position, white balance in manual or auto mode, or focus switch in automatic or manual mode. This is also the first video camera section I've seen in a long time that does not indicate low light levels in the EVF. The EVF indicator system needs a substantial makeover.

This is puzzling because in the past RCA has emphasized features that simplify use. The company was the first, for instance, to offer home deck VCRs that included the ability to program the timer via remote control. The EVF indicator design tells us that perhaps Hitachi, the camcorder manufacturer, had more say in how this unit was to be built than RCA, Hitachi's biggest customer in this regard.

Still, a great deal of effort was put into the right places, and that includes styling. This grey, black and red trim camcorder is a handsome unit, slimmer than the Matsushita-made VHS cassette camcorders (with which it shares

a maximum single cassette recording time of 240 minutes). Overall its contemporary styling looks less Japanese than most VCRs or cameras. It is almost Italianate. I particularly like the racy red stripe running along the camcorder's side.

Answering the demand for stronger batteries, RCA has made available two battery packs: the CB60 and the CB120 with 60 minutes and 120 minutes of continuous recording. If you are likely to extensively use the automatic functions, which require more power, I recommend purchasing the optional two hour pack.

The control layout is a classic: power zoom switches and record stop/start switch on the handgrip; focusing, gain, white balancing, standby and review buttons behind and to the right of the camera barrel (as you face the camcorder) and within easy reach of your left hand during shooting; and standard VCR playback controls (pause, fast forward, power, eject, play, stop) atop the VCR section. There is a counter, but no day/date or stopwatch time insertion capability.

In the final accounting, I felt the RCA camcorder offers thoroughbred video performance but that RCA has not decided whether it wants the user to be more observer than operator, or vice versa. —M.S.

mathematical measurements confused the proceedings. After all, it is how well the camcorder will work for you, in the field, that should be your chief yardstick for gauging its performance.

Beta, VHS, VHSC and 8mm formats had to be represented. But which ones? To answer that question, I reviewed my experiences with different models, took suggestions from videophile colleagues, and eliminated some models, such as VHS camcorders manufactured by Matsushita Electric and sold under different brands, that have a lot, if not everything, in common. Finally, I narrowed the field to four new camcorders:

**Magnavox VR8290GY01 VHS Movie Maker.** Uses standard VHS cassettes. Half-inch Newvicon pickup tube.

F/1.2 9-54mm power zoom. EVF. Autofocus. Record and playback capability. 160 minutes of recording on a single cassette (T 160, SP recording). 8.01 lbs. with battery and cassette.

**Sanyo VRC500 Betamovie.** Accepts standard Beta cassette. Beta and Super Beta luminance shift circuitry. Record only. TTL optical viewfinder. Autofocus, CCD imaging element. 200 minutes recording on a single cassette (BII recording, L830). F/1.4 12-72mm power zoom. 7.4 lbs. with battery and cassette.

**Sony CCD-V8K.** 8mm format. CCD imager. Record and playback. EVF. Manual focusing. 120 minutes recording on a single cassette (P6-120). F/1.4 11.5-70mm power zoom. 5.87 lbs. with battery and cassette.

**Zenith VM6100.** VHSC (Compact) format. Half-inch Saticon pickup tube. EVF. Record and playback. Autofocus. 20 minutes recording on a single cassette. F/1.2 8-48mm power zoom. 6.05 lbs. with battery and cassette.

Part of a camcorder's performance is determined by something other than the camcorder itself—the videotape. For our test I used these cassette formulations:

TDK T-120 E-HG VHS

TDK L-500 E-HG Beta

TDK P6-90MP 8mm

JVC TC-20 Super HG VHSC

Before allowing myself the joy of *alfresco* videotaping I conducted an indoor hands-on test. For this test I wanted a place that would provide constant, quality artificial light, including light sources with different



color temperatures and a mix of natural and artificial light—to fully challenge white balancing systems. We also wanted some dimly lit subjects and subjects with interesting, varied colors. I chose the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The Museum has sufficient light in most of its galleries for adequate video levels, and offers a few rooms with low illumination to protect *objets d'art* that would be damaged irreparably by strong direct lighting. Shooting paintings, sculpture and ancient artifacts also enabled us to make good use of the camcorder's wide angle and telephoto lens settings (the latter to highlight detail).

I didn't want a shimmering sapphire of a day for the outdoor segment. Partly cloudy days softly diffuse the light, which is complementary to subjects and better for videotaping. Bright sunlight is harsh and extremely bright scenes—a beach on a summer day, a snow-topped mountain in winter—can overwhelm white balancing systems and wash out colors (use an ND filter in such situations). Shooting in very bright sunlight also creates strange shadows and causes subjects to squint.

I looked closely at the camcorders' handling, simplicity, operations and convenience features. 'Handling' means how the controls feel, how the camcorder responds, how it was designed to meet real world videotaping needs (or size and weight considerations) and how the engineers did what they could to make its operation effortless and the performance outstanding.

All of the camcorders tested had a multitude of automatic features. When they are active, you should not have to compensate manually. You should not have to override the exposure control or autofocus, except in extreme conditions, nor compensate for a lazy zoom lens motor. I was also looking for optimum camcorder performance, every time, under all conditions.

Handling and simplicity are important because if a camcorder makes few demands on the user, and if he doesn't need a great deal of patience and training to use it well, it will allow him more time to consider

the video movie-making art. He will have time to frame scenes correctly, shoot each sequence correctly and take care of all of the other factors involved in producing a first-rate home video.

It should be noted that experienced product reviewers may not be the best judges of video gear handling qualities. After hours of peering through an EVF we learn how to compensate for a machine's deficiencies. So for us, familiarity may breed contentment. Once we learn how to anticipate and cope with a camcorder's video quirks, they are no longer a problem and the machine, in our minds at least, performs well.

## Handling and Simplicity

The Sanyo Betamovie camcorder's strong suit is its ease of use and the straightforward purposefulness of its control layout. The lens responds almost instantly to zoom changes and the TTL infrared autofocus system finds and maintains focus lock with little attention from the user. Betamovie, which taped its way into video stores in 1983, has had a profound impact on home video moviemaking. Now that the novelty has worn thin, I am happy to report there are improvements in the unit and new areas of video to explore with this machine. On the negative side are its size, and the absence of playback and EVF. This means you must own a Beta VCR to see the results of your efforts. Record only was an acceptable feature in the technology and marketing world of 1983, but now, with Beta's market share less than 20 percent, it is a significant, negative factor.

The greatest gift of the Sanyo camcorder beyond its simple operation and quality picture (more on this shortly) is the data display system: battery discharge time—equivalent to total recording time, can be shown together with a tape counter, time and date. Displayed time and date can be recorded on videotape. Overall the camcorder was well balanced, both on the shoulder and with the accessory shoulder strap, and reasonably comfortable to tote about.

The Magnavox VHS camcorder is also a masterpiece of operational simplicity, but at 8 lbs. with battery and cassette and approximately 6 x 7 x 13 inches, it is the biggest and heaviest of the camcorders tested. What the travelling videographer wants least is to be hampered by excess equipment bulk and weight. Over time this VHS gives one the feeling that it was not constructed for comfort, though I'll admit it was a technical chore to build any sort of transportable unit around the large VHS cassette. The Maggie's transport and EVF display controls are hidden in a compartment along the top outer edge of the camcorder. They are difficult to reach and operate while shooting, since your left hand (this is a right hand, right eye only machine) must loop either in front of or around the top of the camcorder while it sits on your shoulder.

The unit can playback tapes directly to your TV—either through video and audio input terminals or through the antenna terminals, each using the supplied AC adapter/connector box which contains the RF modulator. Oddly—because Magnavox and other VHS camcorder supplies should sell boatloads of these units to VHS fans—there is no provision for recording from a TV tuner.

The CCD-V8K represents Sony's efforts to bring 8mm video to every video consumer—from the video movie-maker to the time-shifting home video enthusiast. To do so it has built a small, lightweight one-piece unit comprised of a complete, separate camera section and a video recorder/player section that have been physically and electronically attached. There are even separate camera and recorder power buttons. The VCR section has most of the features of a top-of-the-line portable video recorder except for slow motion playback. Still (with streaks in the picture) and speed search in either direction are provided.

On the playback side, the flying erase head designed into the 8mm format means glitch-free, color-stain-free editing, particularly with Sony's RM-E100 which stores

*continued on page 150*

## CAMCORDERS COMPARED

	Handling	Ease Of Operation	Picture	Sound	Battery Performance	Special Features	Total
Magnavox VHS	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	13
Sanyo Beta	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	13
Sony 8mm	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	12
Zenith VHSC	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	14

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<b>VTM4200</b> tuner for 4200, cable ready 101 ch. Only 5 oz.	\$104	\$129
<b>KV5300</b> 5" color receiver, 3-way power, tinted glass screen, video & audio in-out. Only 7 lbs.	\$384	\$449
<b>KV8100</b> 7.7" screen, LED channel display, 3-way power, tinted glass screen. 19 lbs.	\$367	\$419
<b>KV9400</b> 9" glare free tinted screen 14 button electronic tuning, LED display.	\$363	\$419
<b>KV1365</b> 13" monitor receiver, 155 ch cable-ready quartz synthesis tuning, mirrorblack screen.	\$258	\$299

## VCR's



### FISHER

	Cost	Usual Selling Price
<b>FVH810</b> Front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 3-event.	\$244	\$288
<b>FVH815</b> Stereo, front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 6-event.	\$315	\$379
<b>FVH820</b> Stereo, 4-head front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 8-event.	\$344	\$409
<b>FVH830</b> 4-head stereo, camera jack, MTS TV stereo built-in. Cable-ready wireless remote, 14-day, 9-event.	\$391	\$489
<b>FVH840</b> 4-Head, Hi Fi MTS stereo, cable-ready, wireless remote, 8-event, 14-day.	\$568	\$630

### TOSHIBA VHS

<b>5020</b> VHS front load, cable-ready, wireless remote. 7-day, 4-event.	\$250	\$299
<b>5400</b> VHS 4-head front load, cable-ready, wireless remote. 7-day, 4-event.	\$322	\$389

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<b>KV1370R</b> 13" monitor receiver, 155 ch cable-ready quartz synthesis tuning, mirrorblack screen, sleep timer remote control, upright design.	\$292	\$349
<b>KV1371R</b> 13" remote control, mirror-black screen, 155 ch cable pay TV ready, sleep timer, rosewood finish, HIT jack.	\$304	\$359
<b>KV1770R</b> 17" remote control, quartz tuning, 181 ch cable-ready, HIT jack, stereo ready MPX jack. Upright design.	\$371	\$419
<b>KV1965</b> 19" monitor receiver, mirrorblack screen, audio-video inputs, quartz tuning, cable ready.	\$320	\$379
<b>KV1966</b> 19" monitor receiver, mirrorblack screen, 155 ch cable-ready, audio-video inputs, quartz tuning.	\$316	\$379
<b>KV1972R</b> 19" remote, quartz tuning, 181 ch cable-ready, MPX jack, stereo ready HIT sleep timer, mirrorblack screen.	\$382	\$449
<b>KV1973R</b> 19" remote control, 181 ch cable-ready, sleep timer, HIT stereo ready, on screen display.	\$391	\$459
<b>KV1976R</b> 19" remote, 181 ch cable-ready, stereo ready, timer/channel block, sleep timer, on screen display.	\$395	\$469
<b>KV1981R</b> 19" stereo monitor receiver, MTS/SAP quartz tuning, 181 ch cable-ready, dual speakers, sleep timer, remote control.	\$477	\$539
<b>KV2084R</b> 20" stereo monitor receiver, comb. filter, MTS/SAP 400 line resol., 4 spkr system, remote control, much more.	\$530	\$589
<b>KV2670R</b> 26" table model, quartz tuning, remote, 181 ch cable-ready, stereo ready, HIT comb filter.	\$560	\$625
<b>KV2680R</b> 26" remote stereo monitor receiver, MTS-SAP decoder, quartz tuning 181 ch cable-ready. Channel block-timer. Much more.	\$770	\$899
<b>KV2681R</b> 26" remote stereo monitor receiver, MTS-SAP decoder, pearl white, cable ready 181 ch, direct video inputs. Much more.	\$895	\$988

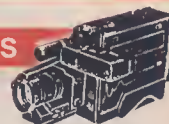
### ZENITH

<b>VR1800</b> 2-head wireless remote, Quartz tuner, front load.	\$238	\$289
<b>VR1805</b> 2-head wireless remote, Quartz tuner, front load, cable-ready.	NEW CALL	
<b>VR2100</b> 4-head front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 4-events.	\$330	\$389
<b>VR3100</b> 4-head direct access cable-ready, front loading, wireless full function remote, LED display.	NEW CALL	
<b>VR3200</b> 6-head Hi Fi MTS stereo 14-day, 8-event quartz tuner, wireless remote, DDLBY LED display.	\$595	\$679

### PANASONIC

<b>PV1330</b> Front load 14-day, 2-event, 10 function wired remote.	\$247	\$289
<b>PV1340</b> Front load 14-day, 4-event, cable-ready, 16-function wireless remote.	\$320	\$359
<b>PV1535</b> 4-head, front load, cable-ready, 14-day, 4-event, 17-function wireless remote.	\$365	\$399
<b>PV1540</b> 4-head, front load, cable-ready, 14-day, 4-event, direct access wireless remote.	\$425	\$479
<b>PV1545</b> Hi Fi, 4-heads, front load, 14-day, 4-event, 21-function key pad remote, cable-ready.	\$521	\$589
<b>PV1740</b> Hi Fi, 169 ch cable-ready, built-in MTS decoder, 4-head, 21-day, 8-event.	\$788	\$869
<b>PV8500</b> Stereo 4-head portable, cable-ready, 14-day, 8-event, direct access 17 function remote, slow motion.	\$618	\$679
<b>PV8600</b> Stackable dockable stereo, 4-head portable cable-ready, 14-day, 8-event, direct access, 17-function remote.	\$715	\$795
<b>PV9600A</b> Hi Fi, 4-head quartz tuning, stackable, portable, 14-day, 8-event, 17-function key pad direct access remote.	\$792	\$869

## VHS CAMERAS



	Cost	Usual Selling Price
<b>PK412</b> 1/2" newvicon tube, 6X power zoom, F1-4 lens with macro 30 lux.	\$399	\$449
<b>PK452</b> 1/2" newvicon tube auto focus, 6X zoom lens, 20 lux, F1.2 lens, date & time fade.	\$510	\$559
<b>PK959</b> 2/3" newvicon auto focus 8X zoom lens, 7 lux stereo keyboard, character gen., scrolling graphics.	\$690	\$749
<b>PK980</b> 2/3" newvicon auto focus 6MHz tube, 380 lines, 10X zoom lens, 10 lux scrolling graphics, stereo mode.	\$790	\$899
<b>PK976</b> 2/3" newvicon 6MHz tube, 15X zoom, C mount lens, 30 lux, scrolling graphics mode.	NEW CALL	

## VHS CAMCORDERS



All units 4-head auto focus 10 lux low light. Includes battery, ac adapter, strap and USA Warranty.

<b>Quasar VM10</b>	\$1120	\$1229
<b>Magnavox 8290</b>	\$1120	\$1229
<b>Sylvania VC150</b>	\$1130	\$1229
<b>Panasonic PV200</b>	\$1185	\$1249
<b>General Electric 6060</b>	\$1120	\$1199

### IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

<b>Olympus VX402</b>	\$1190	\$1299
<b>Pentax PVC11A</b>	NEW	CALL

### 8MM CAMCORDERS

<b>Sony CCD-V8</b>	\$1085	\$1249
<b>Sony CCD-V8AF</b>	NEW	CALL
<b>Canon VME1</b>	NEW	CALL
<b>General Electric 5080</b>	\$625	\$709

### BETA CAMCORDERS

<b>Sony BMC550</b>	\$912	\$979
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# JAMES CAGNEY





# EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE --- PUBLIC ENEMY

## CAGNEY'S FAST TRACK TO STARDOM

---

**T**hey talked fast at Warner Brothers—as if to make up for all those years of silents. As film studios emerged in the 1930s with uncannily distinct personalities, it was obvious that Warner Bros. was the studio of speed. Gangsters on the run, chorines on the hoof, 90-minute social melodramas, jazzy montages that telescoped years into a few flickering minutes: these were Warner's insignia. The studio had a host of hard-working stars under contract and five pictures a year wasn't extraordinary for most. Nobody in Hollywood seemed to do things faster than Warner Bros. and no one at Warner's moved faster than Jimmy Cagney.

In roles ranging from gangster to hooper to reporter, Cagney's punchy personality made what were considered cheap roles by some into first class portrayals. His films, now available on tape, endured even as he withdrew to what many fans mourned as a premature retirement. When he finally returned to films in 1981 with *Ragtime*, his scrappy screen presence sparked a new demand for his earlier performances, and a renewed appreciation of their unflagging energy.

Asked about his acting, Cagney once told a television interviewer, "You get up in the morning, you go to work, you say your lines, and you go home." This casual remark belies the energy he put into his roles. The cocky attitude and the swaggering walk are hardly an act. They find their roots in his childhood and a stint in vaudeville.

A young man from New York's East Side German and Irish neighborhoods, Cagney spent his childhood on the streets. He had no time to waste with contemplation. The streets were rough, and rarely a day passed without a fight. Cagney observed characters—indeed played and worked with them—who would become models for some of his later roles. Most of all, he learned the rules of survival.

Along with three brothers and a sister, the actor remembers being driven, inspired and supported by a mother he calls "the key to the Cagneys," who brooked no nonsense. If a fellow started a scuffle, and the feisty Jimmy found himself in the middle of it, she'd tell him to stand up for his rights and give the other fellow what-for. But when Cagney toyed with the idea of boxing for a living, Mrs. Cagney put the kabosh on that right away. Cagney is fond of describing her response when he argued that since he could lick any kid on the block,

**BY HARVEY ELLIOTT**

why shouldn't he make some money at it? "Well, that's just fine," she said, "but can you lick me, because that's what you'll have to do before you do any professional fighting."

Office boy, shelf-stacker, settlement house laborer, ticket seller on the Hudson Day Line—Cagney took any after-school job he could get to help out the household. One of his courses at Columbia University was in oral reading, which he flunked because he talked so fast the professor couldn't understand him. "Very patiently he would explain the proper tempo to me," Cagney remembers in his autobiography, "and I knew exactly what he meant. The difficulty was that when I tried it, I'd rush along with the old rat-a-tat-tat."

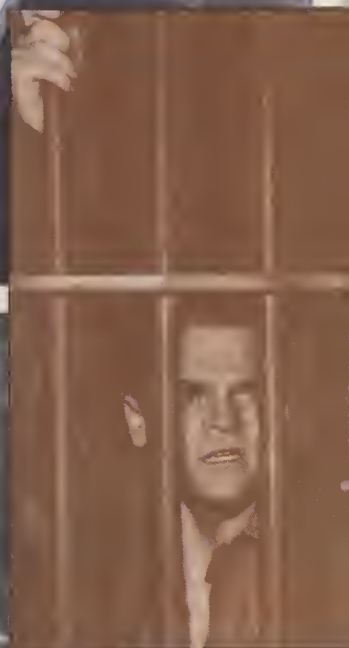
On Sundays he'd play baseball with a neighborhood group that called itself the Yorkville Nut Club. Once the Club team traveled to Sing Sing to play an exhibition game with some prisoners, and Cagney—along with others on his team—started recognizing faces. "Everybody on our team knew *somebody* there," says Cagney. Rough streets, tough survival, and for some of Cagney's childhood buddies from East 79th Street, a one-way trip up the river.

### Dressed to Hoof

Not for Cagney. He put on a dress and went to work in vaudeville. A fellow worker at Wanamaker's—Cagney had a job wrapping packages—talked him into working up a dance routine for a vaudeville act uptown. Cagney could already dance a little; he used to wow 'em with the Peabody at the old Settlement House, so he figured why not? Beats wrapping packages. Beats walking the streets.

One dance step led to another. He didn't stay in drag for long but turned out to be a charming and graceful hoofer. Cagney married a gal, Billie, from the chorus in

*Rat-a-tat-tat: Cagney in (top to bottom) "Ragtime," "Angels with Dirty Faces," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Yankee Doodle Dandy," and (opposite) "The Roaring Twenties."*



1922. Sixty-three years later they are still inseparable. He traveled the country in vaudeville, and picked up part-time work as an assistant prop man when there were no dance jobs. Sometimes Cagney found himself acting in the legitimate theatre. When playwright George Kelly cast him in a show called *Maggie the Magnificent*, it was because he spotted Cagney hanging out by the stage door and thought he had "a fresh mutt."

In that show, he met a gal who would be his first Hollywood leading lady, Joan Blondell. She was Cagney's female counterpart—a sassy, quick-talking dame who was a killer with a comeback line. Five of Cagney's first nine movies at Warner Bros. were with Blondell. In fact, they were sent to Hollywood together, fresh from a nothing play called *Penny Arcade*. (*Maggie the Magnificent* had opened on the night the

stock market crashed and soon folded.) Al Jolson optioned *Penny Arcade* for the movies and convinced Warner Bros. to bring Cagney and Blondell out to Hollywood to recreate their roles.

*Penny Arcade* became *Sinner's Holiday*, and movie audiences heard something they had never heard before—New York street talk. Slick, staccato, intimidating verbal hustle delivered so confidently and fast they didn't know what hit them. They had seen gangsters before and two-bit crooks. But when Cagney showed his mug as a rat-a-tat-tat rumrunner, then followed it up in another underworld story as a bantam bootlegger, Warner Bros. sensed it had a new type of streetwise hero. This was no fancy Eastern college-kid playing cops and robbers for the glamour business. Nor was he a stage-trained stiff who looked silly on

*continued on page 152*



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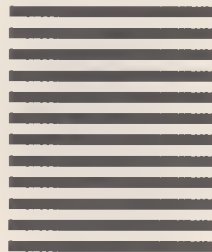
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# Selected Videography

## Angels With Dirty Faces

B&W. 1938. James Cagney, Pat O'Brien, Humphrey Bogart, Ann Sheridan, George Bancroft, Billy Halop. Two playmates, one becomes a priest, the other a gangster. 97 min. LV. \$34.98. CED. \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

## Battling Hooper

(First released as *Something To Sing About*) B&W. 1937. James Cagney, William Frawley, Evelyn Daw, Mona Barrie, Gene Lockhart. New York City bandleader goes to Hollywood. 82 min. Beta. \$49.95. VHS. \$52.95. Yesteryear.

## The Big Breakdowns - Hollywood Bloopers Of The 1930's

B&W. '30s. Outtakes, bloopers, gag scenes and goofs from Warner Brothers films of the late '30s featuring nearly every contract player including Joan Blondell, Humphrey Bogart, James Cagney, Bette Davis, Errol Flynn, John Garfield, Leslie Howard, Boris Karloff, Dick Powell, Edward G. Robinson, Ward Bond, Joe E. Brown, John Garfield, Patsy Kelly, Edgar Kennedy, Paul Muni, Pat O'Brien, Porky Pig, Anna May Wong, Jane Wyman. 27 min. Beta. \$29.95. VHS. \$31.95. Yesteryear.

## Blood On The Sun

B&W. 1945. James Cagney, Sylvia Sydney, Porter Hall, Robert Armstrong, Wallace Ford, Rosemary DeCamp. 94 min. Beta. \$49.95. VHS. \$52.95. Yesteryear.

## The Bob Hope Chevy Show

B&W. 1956. Bob Hope, Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz, Vivian Vance, William Frawley, Diana Dors, James Cagney, Don Larson, Les Brown Orchestra. The Oct. 21, 1956 first show of the television season. From NBC-TV. 52 min. Beta. \$39.95. VHS. \$42.95. Yesteryear.

## Caming Attractions #1 - The Super Stars

B&W, Color. 1930-1975. Compilation of theatrical trailers. Includes "Yankee Doodle Dandy" ('42) - James Cagney, Joan Leslie, Irene Manning, Francis Langford; "Footlight Parade" ('33) & "Gold Diggers Of 1935" ('35) - James Cagney, Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, Ruby Keeler. 31 min. Beta. \$29.95. VHS. \$31.95. Yesteryear.

## Footlight Parade

B&W. 1933. James Cagney, Joan Blondell, Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell, Guy Kibbee, Ruth Donnelly, Hugh Herbert, Frank McHugh. Stage director outdoes himself. Busby Berkeley numbers include "Honey-moon Hotel," "By A Waterfall," "Shanghai Lil." 104 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Key./CED. \$24.98. RCA.

## Great Guy

B&W. 1937. James Cagney, Mae Clarke. Ex-prize fighter battles corruption in the food business. 75 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Silver.



## Going Hollywood: The Thirties

Color. 1983. Robert Preston hosts a look at the reality and make-believe of the Hollywood Dream Factories. Clark Gable, Joan Crawford, Henry Fonda, James Cagney, Carole Lombard, John Wayne, Mae West, Bette Davis, Marx Brothers. 75 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo), VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

## Hollywaad Bloopers

B&W. '50s. Humorous outtakes from famous motion pictures of the period with Lauren Bacall, Ronald Reagan, James Stewart, Joan Blondell, Barbara Stanwyck, Bette Davis, James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, Rosalind Russell, Errol Flynn, Kirk Douglas. 40 min. Beta, VHS. \$25.95. Dimensions.

## A Midsummer Night's Dream

B&W. 1935. James Cagney, Dick Powell, Hugh Herbert, Olivia de Havilland, Mickey Rooney, Joe E. Brown, Victor Jory. Fairies try to change mankind's ways. 118 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Key.

## Mister Roberts

Color. 1955. Henry Fonda, James Cagney, Jack Lemmon, William Powell, Betsey Palmer, Ward Bond, Phil Carey, Nick Adams, Ken Curtis, Harry Carey Jr. 120 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner./CED. \$21.98. RCA.

## Presidential Bloopers Reel

B&W. 1940s - 1960s. Ronald Reagan, Bette Davis, Humphrey Bogart, James Cagney, Red Skelton, James Arness, Edward G. Robinson. Motion picture and television outtakes. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$44.95. Budget.

## Public Enemy

B&W. 1931. James Cagney, Edward Woods, Leslie Fenton, Joan Blondell, Mae Clarke, Jean Harlow. 85 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. CBS/Fox. 96 min./CED. \$21.98. RCA.

## Rogtime

Color. 1981. James Cagney, Brad Dourif, Moses Gunn, Elizabeth McGovern, Kenneth McMillan, James Olson, Mandy Patinkin, Howard E. Rollins, Mary Steenburgen. 156 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$84.95./LV. \$39.95. Paramount./CED. \$31.98. RCA.

## The Roaring Twenties

B&W. 1939. James Cagney, Priscilla Lane, Humphrey Bogart, Gladys George, Jeffrey Lynn, Frank McHugh, Joe Sawyer. Former WWI buddies find themselves on different sides of the '30s prohibition law enforcement. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Key./95 min. CED. \$24.98. RCA.

## Something To Sing About

(Reissued as *Battling Hooper*) B&W. 1937. James Cagney, William Frawley, Evelyn Daw, Mona Barrie, Gene Lockhart. New York City bandleader goes to Hollywood. 80 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes. Beta. \$44.95. VHS. \$49.95. Penguin.

## Stor Bloopers

B&W. 1979. Missed cues, goofs, bad props and the reactions of Ronald Reagan, Joan Crawford, Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, James Cagney, Edward G. Robinson, Eve Arden and others. 47 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Thorn EMI.

## White Heat

B&W. 1949. James Cagney, Virginia Mayo, Edmond O'Brien, Margaret Wycherly. 114 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.98./CED. \$29.98. CBS/Fox. \$19.95. RCA.

## Yankee Doodle Dandy

B&W. 1942. James Cagney, Joan Leslie, Walter Huston, Richard Whorf. 126 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. CBS/Fox. CED./\$21.98. RCA.

# Sources

**Budget Video**, 1540 North Highland Ave. #108, Los Angeles, Calif. 90028. (213-466-2431; 213-466-2432).

**CBS/Fox Video**, 1211 Ave. of the Americas, 2nd Floor, New York N.Y. 10036. (212-819-3200).

**Kortes Video Communications**, 10 East 106th Street, Indianapolis, Ind. 46280. (800-428-6163, 800-692-6048).

**Key Video**, 1298 Prospect Ave., La Jolla, Calif. 92037. (619-459-0500).

**Monterey Home Video**, 7920 Alabama Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91304. (800-423-7455).

**Paramount Home Video**, 5451 Marathon St., Hollywood, Calif. 90038. (213-468-5000).

**Penguin Video Productions**, PO Box 65157, Los Angeles, Calif. 90065. (213-222-2707).

**RCA VideoDiscs**, 1133 Ave. Of The Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-930-4700).

**Silver Screen Edition**, 1875 Century Park East #1010, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067. (213-277-3270).

**Thorn EMI/HBO Video**, 1370 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019. (212-977-8990).

**Video Dimensionians**, 110 East 23rd St., Suite 603, New York, N.Y. 10010. (212-533-5999).

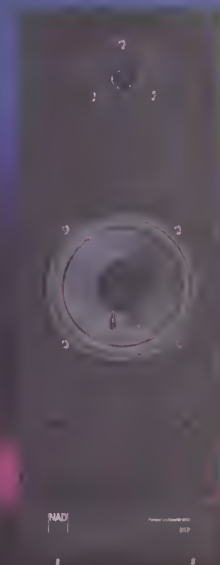
**Video Yesteryear**, Box C, Sandy Hook, Conn. 06482. (800-243-0987).

**Warner Home Video Inc**, 4000 Warner Blvd, Burbank, Calif. 91522. (818-954-6000).

HITACHI



# SOUNDS OF SCIENCE



NAD



**B**ack in the dark ages of video—about five years ago—audio was the lowly stepchild of the industry. The philosophy was simple: "The picture comes first." And woe be to anyone who wanted to hear TV sound on anything better than two tin cans and a piece of string.

Now, in these all-too-aware times on MTV, Beta/VHS Hi-Fi, and MTS sound, a lot of people want better audio from their video systems. Music videos, Hollywood fea-

# SPEAKERS FOR YOUR SCREEN

BY MARC WIELAGE



PROTON 607M

tures, even sportscasts are more enjoyable with improved sound. The best way to start is by getting rid of those tin cans.

You would think practically any speakers sold would suffice for video applications, but this isn't necessarily so. Most people tend to want their speakers along either side of the screen, since this more or less matches the placement of a movie theater screen and its speakers. The problem is that the powerful magnets in most loudspeakers cast stray electrical fields through the picture tube and create "moire" patterns which could eventually damage the tube.

Scientists quickly cooked up three solutions. First, they could shield the frame of the speaker, lining it with metal to prevent

any residual magnetism from leaking out. Second, they could shield the magnet itself. Lastly, they could add a second magnet to the speaker cone to counteract the magnetic field. The last method has the extra benefit of actually improving the performance of the speakers, making it easier to get more sound with only a little amplifier power.

Most of the speakers in our selective chart use the last method to eliminate any magnetic field effects, making them perfectly safe for use in video installations or anywhere else. On the other hand, just because you *can* put the speakers close to your set doesn't mean you *should*. Experts will tell you that the closer your speakers are placed, the less accurate the stereo

separation will be between them. In an average-size living room, it's a good idea to have at least six feet and preferably more between the speakers if you have the space to do so. By the same token, you shouldn't keep them too far apart since this could create a "hole in the middle" effect, with disembodied sounds coming far away from the screen. If this proves to be a problem, consider leaving your set's mono speaker on at a low volume, using it mainly for dialogue, and using your large speakers for music and sound effects—an effective approach used by many movie theaters.

Two major kinds of loudspeaker are available: "dynamic" or cone speakers, which pass current through a magnet to

*continued on page 156*

## LOUDSPEAKERS FOR TVs

Make & Model	Price <sup>1</sup>	Dimensions <sup>2</sup>	Type	Tweeter	Midrange	Woofer	Features
<b>B &amp; W</b> VM-1	\$338	9¼ × 10¼ × 10	Bass Reflex	1" dome	—	8"	Silver or black cabinet.
<b>B &amp; W</b> VM-2	\$538	26¾ × 11½ × 12½	Acoustic Suspension	1" dome	—	8"	Silver or black cabinet.
<b>Bose</b> Video Roommate	\$279	6 × 9 × 6	Bass Reflex	—	—	4½"	Built-in amp (power not rated); grey cabinet.
<b>Boston Acoustics</b> A-40V	\$170	13½ × 8¼ × 7½	Acoustic Suspension	¾" dome	—	6½"	Shielded version of A-40; wood-finish cabinet.
<b>Design Acoustics</b> PS-6V	\$260	12 × 8⅞ × 11½	Acoustic Suspension	¾"	—	6"	Black cabinet.
<b>Fisher</b> STV-015	\$300	19 × 11 × 13½	Bass Reflex	3"	4"	8"	Hickory woodgrain cabinet.
<b>Infinity</b> VRS-1	\$899	18 to 25 (adjustable) × 10½ × 11½	Acoustic Suspension	1½" EMIT	2" dome	8"	Built-in 60-watts per channel amp with tone and input controls; auto turn-on and remote volume control; black cabinet.
<b>Infinity</b> VRS-2	\$450	18 to 25 (adjustable) × 10½ × 11½	Acoustic Suspension	1" dome	—	8"	Built-in 25-watts per channel amp with tone and input controls; auto turn-on and remote volume control; black cabinet.
<b>Infinity</b> VRS-3	\$299	18 to 25 (adjustable) × 10½ × 11½	Acoustic Suspension	1" dome	—	8"	Same as VRS-2, without built-in amp; black cabinet.
<b>Infinity</b> VRS-4	\$199	13½ × 8½ × 7¾	Acoustic Suspension	¾" dome	—	8"	Shielded version of Infinity RS-10; black cabinet.
<b>Jensen</b> AVS-5250	\$230	22½ × 8 × 8	Passive Radiator	1" dome	—	5¼"	Silver cabinet.
<b>NAD</b> 8100	\$248	30½ × 9 × 10	Acoustic Suspension	1" dome	—	5"	Built-in 40-watts per channel bi-amp; black cabinet.
<b>Panasonic</b> SB-405T	\$140	11¼ × 7¼ × 7	Bass Reflex	—	—	6½" cone	Silver cabinet.
<b>Pioneer</b> CS-V70	\$349	26½ × 16½ × 12½	Bass Reflex	3" cone	4¾" cone	13"	Black cabinet.

<sup>1</sup> Price is suggested list per pair.

<sup>2</sup> Dimensions are height by width by depth in inches.



## SOURCES

### B&W

Box 653  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14240  
(416-438-1012)

### Boston Acoustics

247 Lynnfield St.  
Peabody, Mass. 01960  
(617-532-2111)

### Design Acoustics/

### Audio Technica

1221 Commerce Drive  
Stow, Ohio 44224  
(216-686-2600)

### Fisher

21314 Lassen St.  
Chatsworth, Calif. 91311

(213-998-7322)

### Infinity Systems

9409 Owensmouth  
Chatsworth, Calif. 91311  
(213-709-9400)

### Jensen

4136 N. United Parkway  
Schiller Park, Ill. 60176  
(800-323-0707)

### NAD

675 Canton St.  
Norwood, Mass. 02062  
(617-769-7050)

### Panasonic

1 Panasonic Way  
Secaucus, N.J. 07094  
(201-348-7000)

### Pioneer Video

200 W. Grand Ave.

Montvale, N.J. 07645  
(201-573-1122)

### Polk Audio

1915 Annapolis Rd.  
Baltimore, Md. 21230  
(301-837-4300)

### Proton

737 W. Artesia Blvd.  
Compton, Calif. 90220  
(213-638-5151)

### Quasar

9401 W. Grand Avenue  
Franklin Park, Ill. 60131  
(312-451-1200)

### RCA

600 N. Sherman Drive  
Indianapolis, Ind. 46201  
(317-267-5000)

### Sansui

1250 Valley Brook Ave.  
Lynhurst, N.J. 07071  
(201-460-9710)

### H.H. Scott

20 Commerce Way  
Woburn, Mass. 01888  
(617-933-8800)

### Sony

1 Sony Drive  
Park Ridge, N.J. 07656  
(201-930-1000)

### Teknika

1633 Broadway  
N.Y.C. 10019

### Zenith

1000 Milwaukee Ave.  
Glenview, Ill. 60025  
(312-391-8181)

Make & Model	Price <sup>1</sup>	Dimensions <sup>2</sup>	Type	Tweeter	Midrange	Woofer	Features
<b>Pioneer</b> CS-V900D	N.A.	26 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> × 15 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> × 13 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	Bass Reflex	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " ribbon	4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	12"	Natural-wood veneer cabinet.
<b>Polk</b> VS-12	\$300	14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> × 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 11	Bass Reflex	1" dome	—	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Black or silver cabinet.
<b>Polk</b> VS-19	\$300	17 × 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 11	Bass Reflex	1" dome	—	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Black or silver cabinet.
<b>Polk</b> VS-25	\$400	21 × 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 11	Passive Radiator	1" dome	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Black or silver cabinet.
<b>Proton</b> 302	\$130	18 × 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Acoustic Suspension	1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	—	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Black cabinet.
<b>Proton</b> 303	\$150	23 × 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Acoustic Suspension	1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	—	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Black cabinet.
<b>Proton</b> 312	\$300	18 × 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Passive Radiator	1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	—	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Built-in 25-watts per channel amp; black cabinet.
<b>Proton</b> 313	\$300	23 × 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Passive Radiator	1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	—	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Built-in 25-watts per channel amp; black cabinet.
<b>Quasar</b> SW-494	\$350	29 × 16 × 16	Acoustic Suspension	Horn	4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Wood-finish cabinet.
<b>RCA</b> SPK-215	\$159	23 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 12 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> × 5 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Passive Radiator	2" cone	—	Two 4"	Black or wood-finish cabinet.
<b>RCA</b> SPK-375	\$400	24 × 14 × 12	Air Suspension	1" dome	4" dome	11"	Black or wood-finish cabinet.
<b>Sansui</b> S-V727	\$320	34 × 13 × 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Passive Radiator	2" cone	4" cone	8"	Wood-finish cabinet.
<b>Sansui</b> S-V1127	\$720	41 × 14 × 13	Passive Radiator	3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> " cone	4" cone	12"	Wood-finish cabinet.
<b>H.H. Scott</b> 206V	\$220	13 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> × 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Acoustic Suspension	1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	—	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Gray cabinet.
<b>Sony</b> SS-X2A	\$110	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> × 10 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> × 5	Bass Reflex	2" cone	—	4"	Silver cabinet.
<b>Sony</b> APM-X250	\$200	22 × 11 × 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Passive Radiator	3.44" square APM	—	5.13" square APM	Silver or wood-finish cabinet.
<b>Teknika</b> ATV-S2	\$199	21 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> × 5 × 12	Passive Radiator	2" dome	—	5"	Silver cabinet.
<b>Zenith</b> CV-150	\$100	11 × 11 × 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Bass Reflex	2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " dome	—	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	Silver cabinet.

<sup>1</sup> Price is suggested list per pair.

<sup>2</sup> Dimensions are height by width by depth in inches.



## **BASF Chrome Video brightens your sights and sounds.**

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*And it's guaranteed for a lifetime.*

*So brighten your sights and sounds with BASF Chrome Video.*

*You'll get superior quality time after time after time.*



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# **BASF**

Chrome Audio & Video Tapes

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If it existed, you couldn't live without it.

# 99 STEPS TO THE PERFECT VCR

Car buffs do it. So do audiophiles. And wine connoisseurs. Not to mention coin and stamp collectors. In fact, just about everyone who's into anything rare, exotic, or expensive shares a common dream. They're all after the ultimate. And Videophiles are no different. They've got visions of super-so-

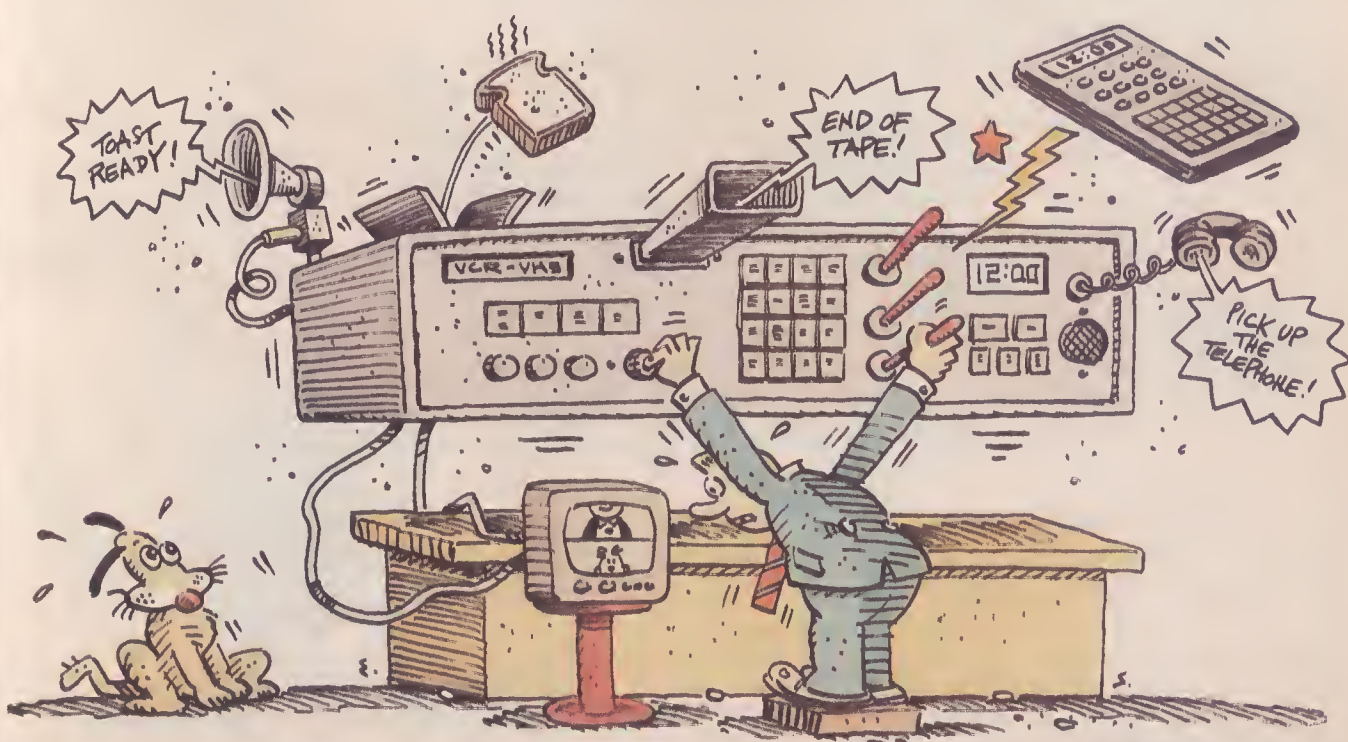
phisticated videotape recorders with features and tricks that would boggle the mind of even the most jaded video nut.

Assembling a composite portrait of the ultimate means avoiding modesty or trepidation. We're going to lay it all on the line this time. Our dream machine has got the works. Ad Ed McMahon might say,

"everything you've ever wanted in a VCR is in this list—or, at least, everything we've come up with.

What does that include? Well, we've taken the best features from all the best VCRs over the last 10 years, added a few dozen improvements of our own, and come up with what we think is the ultimate VCR.

By Roderick Woodcock and Marc Wielage



Illustrations by Elwood Smith

## Tape Handling Features

**1 Format.** Could be either VHS or Beta, even 8mm. The ultimate VCR in our story is VHS because that's the most popular format. But we'd take it in any format.

**2 Transport.** Like most new VCRs, our ultimate machine is a front-loader—though with a few new twists. For optimum tape-handling efficiency, we're going with U-loading, as in Beta, some 8mm machines, and the European Grundig VHS machines. The tape will thread up and stay there when the VCR

**5 Six-Motor Design.** That's one motor each for the supply and takeup reels, one for the headwheel, one for the capstan, one to thread the tape around the drum, and one more for the front-loading cassette mechanism—all of them direct-drive.

**6 Auto Power On.** Just insert a cassette into the VCR and the power will come on automatically.

**7 Power Off Eject.** Press Eject when the power is off and you'll still be able to extract the cassette. This feature's already on Sony's SL-HF900.

**8 Rewind Power Off.** As on the Hitachi VT-89A: start the tape rewinding,

all the way from a still frame up to a 9X search speed. Both features would be great to have.

**12 Skipscan.** To check on where you are while rapidly winding a tape in forward or reverse, press a button on the remote or the VCR and switch from a non-picture winding mode to a high-speed visual-search mode.

**13 Presettable Scan Mode.** With this feature you'll be able to preset the VCR to search for a specific length of time. A 20-second interval at a speed of 6X normal, for example, would take you right up to the end of a two-minute block of commercials. We'll bet the boys on Madison Avenue will love that one!

a memory, so you can add or erase whatever channels you want, with no limit on how many can be held in memory. You can also program the tuner to display onscreen not just the channel number, but also the name of the station—say, WTBS for Channel 7, and so on. Of course, our tuner will use digital processing for the best possible picture quality.

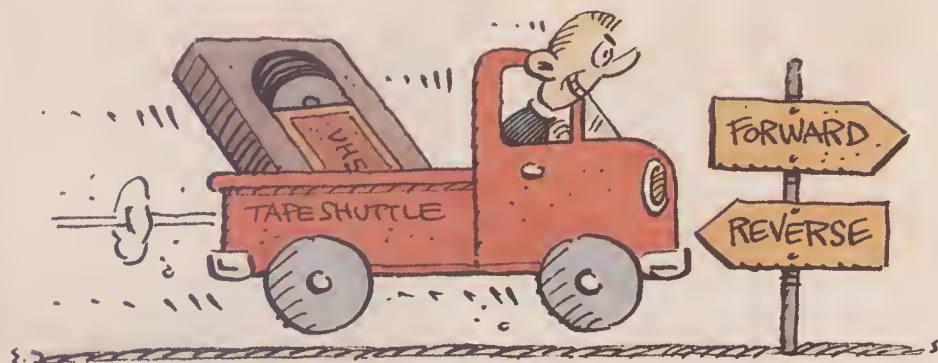
**16 Last Channel.** The tuner will also remember the last channel you just viewed, so you can recall it at the touch of a button from the remote, or go back to your current station if you prefer.

**17 Security Code.** You'll be able to enter a special security code to "lock out" certain channels and VCR functions, to prevent use by unauthorized people. This might make a potential thief think twice before making off with it. It's also a good idea for large families with the Playboy Channel.

**18 Ghost-Eliminating Circuitry.** This feature was originally developed for teletext systems, where the digital data is transmitted as part of the vertical interval in a regular TV signal and where poor reception leads to missing parts of the picture. But it would go a long way toward improving the quality of regular TV reception.

**19 MTS/SAP.** The letters, of course, stand for Multichannel Television Sound and Separate Audio Program. With it built into the VCR tuner, you can receive broadcast stereo TV shows or bilingual telecasts without the need for an outboard adapter.

**20 Simulcast Mode.** Since it's likely that FM simulcasts will continue to be a popular feature for some time, we'll still need the ability to



is stopped, ensuring accurate continuity from one shot to the next. The original VHS M-load system, with its constant loading and unloading cycle, is a pain in the azimuth.

**3 Tape Shuttling.** For rapid tape winding from one spot to the next, the tape will remain around the drum, reducing the delay and extra stress of constantly threading and unthreading. To minimize wear on the video heads, when you want to rewind a tape completely from one end to the other, it will also be possible to have the VCR do that while the tape stays in the shell, as in VHS, some 8mm systems, and a few Sanyo Beta machines.

**4 Full Tape Erasure.** Outboard rewinders can completely erase a tape just by placing a small magnet in the tape path. Why not have this capability in a VCR? By (optionally) leaving the tape wrapped around the drum during fast-forward and rewind modes, you could energize the full erase head and bulk-erase all or part of a tape, and in either direction.

then hit the Power button. The VCR stays on until the tape is completely rewound, then shuts off.

**9 Rewind Play.** Press Rewind first to start the tape rolling, and Play right after that. On Sony's SL-2710, which has this feature, a light in the Play button starts flashing until the tape has rewound to the beginning, when playback automatically starts.

**10 Repeat Play.** On the Toshiba V-9500 and Sharp VC-489, you can mark off the beginning and end of any segment and have the VCR automatically rewind and replay it up to five times.

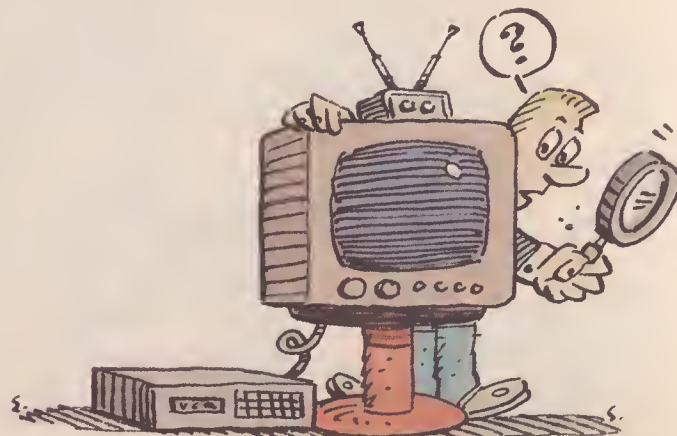
**14 Blank Search.** Press Fast Forward or Rewind and the VCR will stop when it can't count any more control pulses on the tape—blank tape, in other words.

## Tuner Features

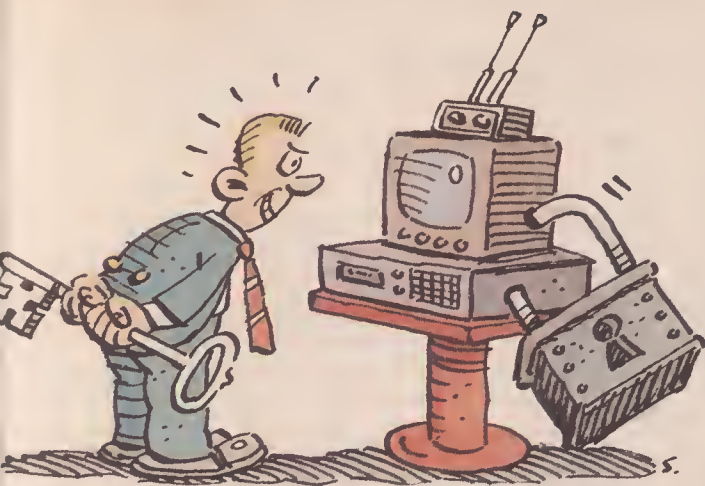
**15 Direct-Access Tuner.** The tuner will be a solid-state frequency-synthesized type with full cable capability. You'll receive more than 180 potential frequencies, though it's unlikely you'll need that many. The tuner will have

## Picture Search

**11 Variable Speed Search.** By using independent reel motors and the U-load system, we'll obtain the advantage of a stress-free variable-speed search system. Toshiba's V-S56, for example, can search anywhere from five to 20 times normal, while Sony's SL-HF900 can be dialed







combine the video signal from the VCR's built-in tuner with an audio signal coming from some outside source.

**21 Two sets of Audio/Video Inputs and Outputs.** With component TV becoming more popular, it makes sense to have more than one set of inputs and outputs on the back of the VCR. One set could be used to feed the monitor, for example, while the other could be looped through another VCR for dubbing. Both outputs would work concurrently, while a vertical-interval switcher would let you to choose between either of the two sets of inputs.

**22 Auto Commercial Alert/Delete.** The moment the program you're taping goes to black, and a commercial comes up on the screen, an audible beep sounds to remind you to hit the Pause button. The same circuit could automatically cut out the commercials too, though with somewhat less accuracy.

**23 Dual Transports.** You've probably heard that Sharp is already building such a machine and selling it overseas. While the concept is feasible, it's not economical, since you could easily interconnect two ultimate VCRs (or even two cheap VCRs) with a set of patch cords and accomplish the same thing. We'll vote thumbs down on this idea, but it does qualify as a trend.

## Timer Features

**24 Onscreen Programming.** This already has been popularized by VCRs sold by Akai, Hitachi, and RCA, and is much easier to work with

than those tiny little buttons and knobs. About the only thing that could be more convenient would be a VCR that responds to voice commands. (We'll save that for next year's model.)

**25 99-Event/1-Year Programming.** Overkill? Maybe, but why not? After all, it doesn't cost that much more to make a computer help a chip recognize 99 events than it costs for 9, right? Each event can be programmed to occur every single day, every weekday (Monday-Friday), or once a week.

**26 Linear-Time Readout.** This is the most accurate means of counting tape usage and time left. A special circuit reads the control track pulses recorded on the tape and displays the results in an hours, minutes, seconds, and video fields readout. The feature is now found on many professional VCRs and some Beta machines, but on few VHS decks, because the M-load system doesn't permit constant contact of the tape with the control heads inside the machine. Since our ultimate VCR will be U-load, that won't be a problem.

**27 Time Remaining.** This is already found on many machines. But to make it more convenient, let's have it display the time left on a tape to the nearest second, rather than the nearest five minutes. Since supposedly standard blank tape lengths can vary, this feature would have to be calibrated to a specific brand.

**28 Onscreen Date Recording.** While onscreen programming places a menu of commands and displays on your screen, none of

these superimposed images are recorded on tape, although they can be copied onto another tape using the ultimate VCR as the player. Normally that's an advantage, since you wouldn't want your tapes cluttered up with irrelevant graphics later on. But wouldn't it be great if you could flip a switch and record the date and channel number for five seconds or so when the VCR goes off in the timer mode?

**29 Programmable Recording Speed.** This feature is now on many JVC decks. It's useful and we would like to see it become a standard feature of every new high-end machine.

**30 Programmable Simulcast.** NEC has a machine with a programmable simulcast mode, and Sony has several with a programmable auxiliary RF input so you can record a premium channel from a converter box. Each is a must-have.

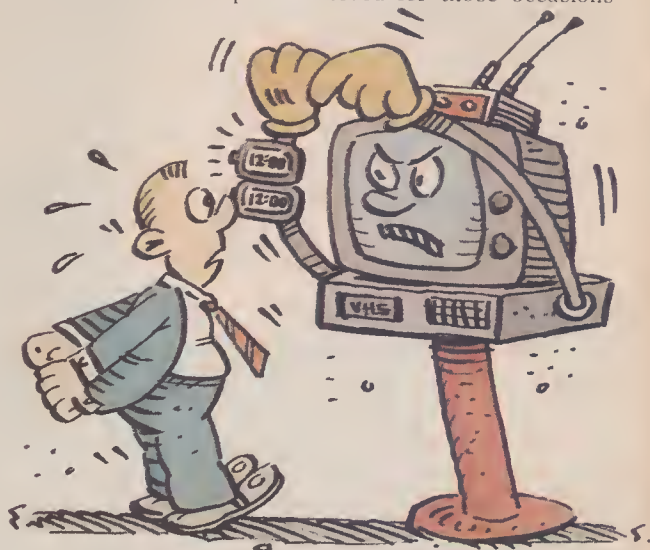
**31 Timer-Conflict Alert.** On some VCRs, if you program two overlapping or conflicting programs, the timer won't tell you this. It'll simply start recording the earlier show first, and then switch to what's left of the second pro-

gram when it's done with the first. I prefer to be reminded of my mistakes so I can correct them. A timer that flashes an "error" indication is a better idea, and a few machines already have them. Also, if you happen to leave the VCR in the "Aux" mode, the timer will automatically record from the tuner instead.

**32 Timer Warning Lights.** Flashing lights alert you if you haven't put a cassette in the machine. And auto cassette eject would help when the record tab is missing, or when the tape is already fully rewound inside the VCR.

**33 Telephone Programming.** Don't laugh, but there have been many times when we were away from home and wished we could have telephoned our VCRs to tell them to record something. Now that virtually everything is computerized and operated by a keypad similar to that on a touch-tone phone, it shouldn't be hard to make this feature work.

**34 Automatic Cassette Changer.** Eight hours may seem a lot of time for VHS, but unfortunately it's all at the slow speed. Quality-conscious videophiles find the two-hour T-120 (or two-hour and forty-minute T-160) too limiting. The solution is an automatic cassette changer. Beta has them, and they're being planned for 8mm decks, so why not for our ultimate VHS machine? Our changer is more or less permanently built into the top of our VCR, but the front-loading slot is left unaltered for those occasions



when we want to watch one tape at a time.

## Video Heads

**35 Recording Playback.** For optimum recording and special-effects reproduction, we'll need one set of heads for each important recording speed. That means at least one set of wide heads for



SP and another set or narrower heads for EP.

**36 Piezo Playback Heads.** While noise-free slow motion and still-frame effects are now obtainable on many machines, picture search still suffers from noise bars. The answer is piezo-controlled video heads, which actually move up and down to completely retrace the track of every recorded video field, producing totally noise-free special effects at any recording speed. Piezo-head systems are available now on at least one machine built by Panasonic and another one by Sharp.

**37 Flying Erase Heads.** Thought six heads were enough? No way. For perfect editing we'll need rotary or "flying" erase heads, just like those on professional equipment and on some of the new 8mm camcorders built by Sony. Instead of erasing the full width of a tape with a single fixed head, rotary heads remove the old video on a more precise "glitch-free" frame-by-frame basis. Gotta have 'em.

**38 Video Confidence Heads** are another professional feature, but well worth having. With these heads you can instantly monitor the signal you've just recorded on the tape a second or so before. Why? With portable, it's an efficient way of determining if you're recording a good signal.

**39 Hi-Fi Heads.** We'll need two, naturally, for a grand total of twelve.

## Operating Controls

**40 Sloping Front-Panel Controls.** All relevant operating controls are right up front where you can see 'em, but a nice adjustable sloping design gives the panel that high-tech professional look, not to mention making it easier to operate controls.

**41 Status Lights.** Symbolic LEDs inset in the function buttons make control status easier to see from across the room.

**42 Beeper Feedback.** An audible function-button feedback is helpful, especially when you're working with a remote control from across the

room. Toshiba's VX-34 has this, and of course you can turn it off when you don't want it.

**43 Flashing Pause Light.** To increase visibility and remind you that the deck is in pause.

**44 Auto Pause After Five Minutes.** Seems obvious, but surprisingly, many new decks have overlooked this elementary and valuable feature. A beep will warn the user when this mode is about to engage. After five minutes, the tape is pulled away from the heads slightly to avoid head wear and tape clogging.

**45 Alphanumeric Display Readout.** On-screen programming is wonderful, but let's go all out and couple it with a highly visible front-panel display that prints out what mode you're in, as on the Panasonic PV-1740 and many other Matsushita decks. Other readouts include clock time, audio mode, and tape speed. Each function also appears onscreen when desired.

**46 Tape-End Indicator.** A flashing status light starts winking when about five minutes of tape is left.

**47 Display On/Off Switch.** For 'insomniacs who can't get to sleep 'cause of all the lights on their VCRs, a single switch turns them all off while still letting

the VCR work.

**48 Tape-Motion Indicator.** Sharp has a nice one—a series of tiny diodes arranged in the shape of a cassette. When the tape starts to move in either direction, the diodes light up sequentially to indicate tape motion. Sure, it's a gimmick—but a neat gimmick.

**49 Cassette-In Indicator** is an obvious feature, but an essential one, especially with a front-loading deck. It could probably be built into the tape-motion indicator to save space.

**50 Built-In 10-Pin Camera Jack.** With camcorders becoming more popular for outdoor taping, the need to plug a camera directly into a homebound VCR seems less important—unless, of course, you consider the advantages of all those new self-contained character generators and other accessories that plug in via camera jack.

**51 Automatic Tracking.** 8mm has it (courtesy of an entirely new video system with special control signals) but now so does VHS, on a few of the newer machines from RCA. So let's put it in our ultimate VCR—with manual override, of course.

**52 Tracking Meters.** The standard method of tracking a videotape is to turn

the knob left and right until noise fills the picture and leave the knob at the position where the noise disappears (or is the least objectionable). But that's a pretty arbitrary system. On many Hi-Fi machines, the VU meters double as visual tracking aids. Our VCR has an onscreen display with an "X" that you move along a horizontal line, peaking it to the right for optimum tracking.

**53 Headwheel Odometers.** How many hours do you really use your VCR? For years, professional machines have had little meters that keep track of the time (in hours) the headwheel is spinning. This will give you a better idea when it's time to pay a visit to your local serviceman.

## Audio Capabilities

**54 Hi-Fi Sound.** We'd hardly have the ultimate without it.

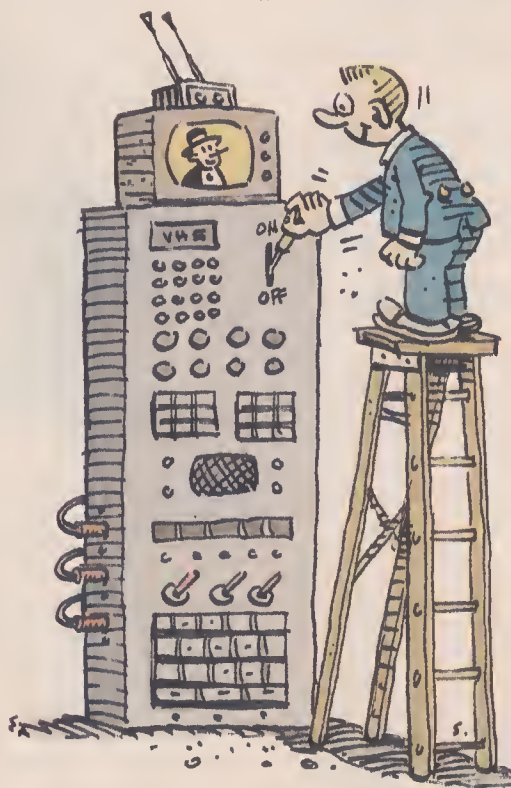
**55 Mono/Stereo Record** allows you to combine the stereo tracks to create compatible mono for older machines, or for special mixing purposes.

**56 Split-Track Stereo.** Linear stereo recording and playback with Dolby-B noise reduction is rarely found on 1985 Hi-Fi models—but still useful to have.

**57 Linear-Track Audio Dub.** Our machine lets you replace the audio on either channel 1, channel 2, or both. Since the advent of Hi-Fi recording, some manufacturers have started to eliminate this feature. Well, we need it back, especially since you can't dub in Hi-Fi. The two linear channels are the only way of providing any audio postproduction capability for the home user.

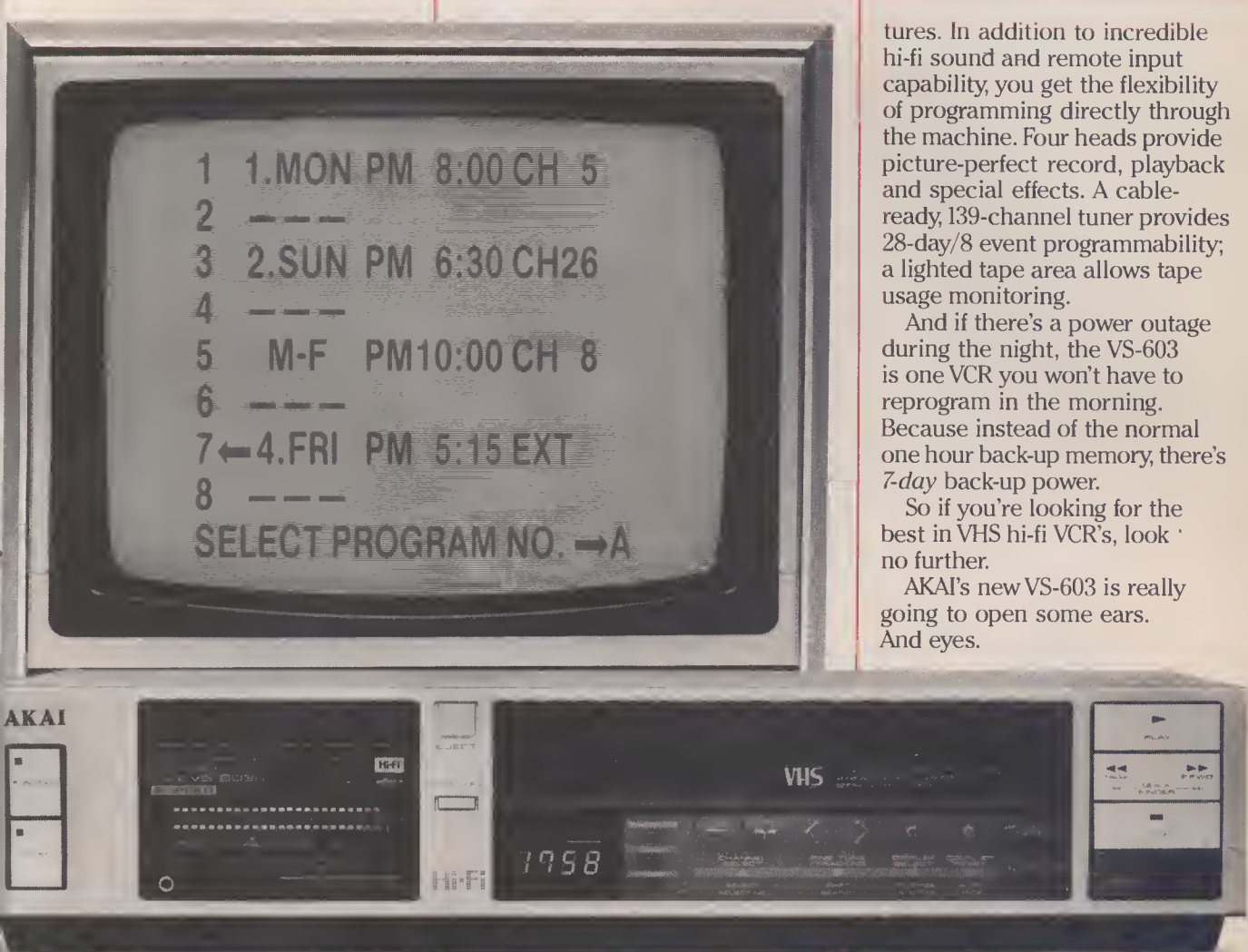
**58 Sound-on-Sound Recording** lets you mix a new soundtrack on an old one without completely erasing the original.

**59 Video Insert with Audio.** We're not just talking video dub, where all you can do is slip in a new scene over an old one. We want genuine insert editing, along with simultaneous audio dub if you wish, on either one or both audio channels. Sony's SL-HF900 is the current Beta in-





# NO OTHER HI-FI VCR CAN GIVE YOU THIS KIND OF MENU.

The image shows an AKAI VS-603 VCR. The screen displays a menu with 8 numbered options. Option 7 is highlighted with a left-pointing arrow. Below the menu is the text 'SELECT PROGRAM NO. →A'. The VCR unit below the screen has a digital display showing '1758' and various control buttons on the right side.

1 1.MON PM 8:00 CH 5  
2 ---  
3 2.SUN PM 6:30 CH26  
4 ---  
5 M-F PM10:00 CH 8  
6 ---  
7←4.FRI PM 5:15 EXT  
8 ---  
SELECT PROGRAM NO. →A

tures. In addition to incredible hi-fi sound and remote input capability, you get the flexibility of programming directly through the machine. Four heads provide picture-perfect record, playback and special effects. A cable-ready, 139-channel tuner provides 28-day/8 event programmability; a lighted tape area allows tape usage monitoring.

And if there's a power outage during the night, the VS-603 is one VCR you won't have to reprogram in the morning. Because instead of the normal one hour back-up memory, there's 7-day back-up power.

So if you're looking for the best in VHS hi-fi VCR's, look no further.

AKAI's new VS-603 is really going to open some ears. And eyes.

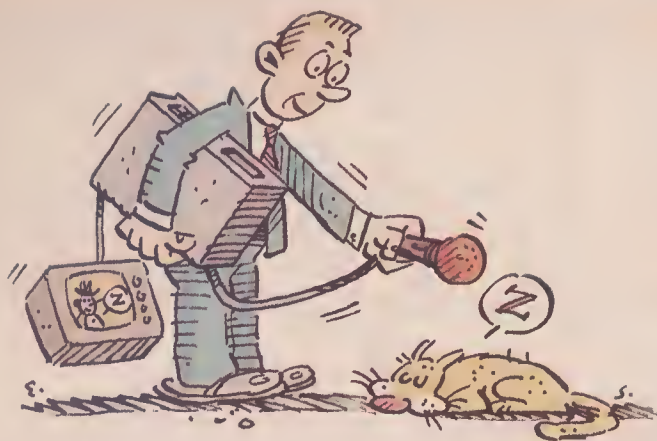
AKAI's new Hi-Fi VS-603 may well make ordinary VCR programming seem obsolete.

Because now, the combination of convenient full-function wireless remote programming and an interactive monitor system allows you to see the *full* menu

of 8 programs. All at *one time*. So there's no waiting for that missed portion to reappear on the display. And no more missed shows due to programming accidents.

What's more, the new AKAI VS-603 comes jam-packed with plenty of other impressive fea-

**AKAI**  
Hi-Fi  **VHS**



carnation of this feature, but let's put it into our ultimate VHS machine as well.

**60 Hi-Fi Audio Dub.** Practically speaking, this feature doesn't appear feasible, since the VHS Hi-Fi audio tracks are beneath the video tracks and can't be changed without altering the video. But what if there were a way of overdubbing the audio through an open guardband space? Or maybe it would be possible to use those flying erase heads and another set of playback heads to alternately erase and re-record the video and new audio a split second later. I'm no engineer, but I'll bet the real ones are working on this problem right now.

**61 Dual Headphone Jacks**—with separate continuously adjustable volume control. Why two? Do we really have to explain this one?

**62 Auto or Manual Level Control.** Standard practice for high-end Hi-Fi decks. Our auto control is more sophisticated than most, employing a limiter to prevent distortion of audio peaks. Also, if you prefer, you can preset a different audio level for the linear tracks than for the Hi-Fi ones to take advantage of the latter's dynamic range.

**63 Peak Hold Meters.** Some Hi-Fi machines have 'em, others don't. Our machine has to have 'em—LEDs on the VCR and a switchable visual display on the monitor, superimposed over the picture.

**64 Audio Output Level Control,** so you can adjust the level for dubbing, or when feeding it into an amplifier.

**65 All-Channel Audio Mix.** With four potential

channels (two Hi-Fi and two linear), you'll want to be able to control the output from any or all of them at the press of a button.

## Video Features

**66 Super Picture Quality.** With SuperBeta now established as the highest-resolution consumer half-inch format, this is an absolute must.

**67 Video Noise-Reduction On/Off Switch**—so you can customize the look of the tapes you make, adding more detail.

**68 Sharpness Control.** A built-in horizontal/vertical enhancer will sharpen the picture without adding extra noise.

**69 Tape-Thickness Switch.** This would optimize the pinch-roller capstan pressure for optimum recording quality, as well as let the VCR's tape-remaining feature know how long the tape will last.

**70 Instant Record with Delay Start.** The standard IRT works by just pressing a button. Each press delivers an auto-recording mode of 30 minutes or more. But our system will let you preset any length of time, using the keypad on the VCR or the remote. Plus, you'll be able to program in a delay or "stand-by" time of any length. Some Matsushita decks such as the Panasonic PV-1740 already have this.

**71 Instant Play.** You could also call this a "sleep" play feature. It works like Instant Record, but in playback. It lets you preset the time you want the VCR to shut down in playback, in case you

fall asleep in front of the TV.  
**72 Electronic Program Indexing.** This would be just as you'll find on the Sony SL-HF900, only with 99 cue points that you can add or delete, instead of just 9.

## Remote Control Features

Most of these are standard, but some are not. All functions work in the infrared mode except the stereo headphone outputs.

**73 Transport/Functions**—Power on/off, TV/VCR, Channel Up/Down, random-access 10-digit keypad, Play, Stop, Rewind, Reverse Search (separate buttons), Fast Forward, Forward Search (separate buttons), Forward/Reverse slow motion (rocker switch, variable from still frame right up to full speed, with audio except in still), Slow motion speed Up/Down, Normal speed reverse Play, Still frame, Forward/Reverse frame advance (rocker switch), Double speed play with audio, Audio Mute.

**74 Remote Counter Reset.** Now found on the Mitsubishi HS-430.

**75 Remote Cassette Eject.** Now found on the NEC VC-N65.

**76 Favorite Channel.** You can designate any of up to four often-viewed channels as "favorites" and cycle through each of them of just by pressing a single button on the remote.

**77 Playback from Pause or Play.** On most VCRs, you press Pause/Still to stop the tape and to start it again. On JVC decks, you hit Pause/Still to stop and Play to resume playback (or record, if that's what you're doing). Toshiba has the best idea on a few of their Beta decks—press either Pause/Still or Play to start the tape rolling again.

**78 Remote Tracking Control.** I know we've ordered automatic tracking, but for hard-to-track tapes, you'll be able to trim the tracking from your chair rather than just at the deck. An onscreen readout makes this and the latter feature easy to accomplish.

**79 Remote Slow-Tracking Control.** Needed in

the special effects mode, again for tapes that are hard to track (like some poorly duplicated rental tapes, where the quality can range from excellent to just plain bad).

**80 Remote-Control On/Off Switch.** There are occasions when you want to be able to turn the remote off, lest any chance accidentally pressing of a button ruin a recording session—like when the family pet steps on the Pause button!

**81 Dockable Remote Control.** Why not build a little niche in the front of the VCR so you can store the remote when you're not using it? A good idea as long as the VCR retains its own set of controls, so you can run it when the remote is out of its bay.

**82 Optional Remote-Control Cord.** With cordless convenience, who would want a cord? Audiophiles for one—they'll want to use the remote's two stereo headphone jacks. Wired remote controls are also handy for those occasions when you want to avoid having one infrared remote interfere with another.

**83 Twin Remote Frequencies.** For those of you wealthy enough to afford two of our ultimate VCRs, this feature lets you push the buttons on one remote without triggering the other machine. It's on Sony's SL-HF900.

## Onscreen Readouts

We're already using our TV screen to check programming, tracking, and channel selection of our ultimate VCR. At the risk of cluttering up the screen so much you can't see the picture, you can preset any of these displays to appear on the screen at the touch of a button, though only the channel number/station and time can be recorded onto a tape. All but the video level/chroma/hue controls are duplicated on the VCR's front panel.

**84 Channel Number/Station.** Naturally. A basic.

**85 Clock Timer.** Our clock has seconds, unlike most timers.

**86 VCR Input** shows whether you're recording  
*continued on page 168*



**They gave him hate,  
He gave them Hell.**



# THUNDER WARRIOR

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Directed By LARRY LUDMAN

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# Allen in Wonderland

**I**n December, producer Irwin Allen's latest multi-million-dollar extravaganza will appear before television audiences around the nation, and moviegoers familiar with the producer's work are in for a sobering experience: There will be no burning skyscrapers, no overturned oceanliners, no mile-wide swarms of killer bees. Instead there'll be the Mad Hatter, Mock Turtle, White Rabbit, Humpty Dumpty, and a charming little blonde girl enchanting audiences with warmth, humor, song, and dance.

Come again? White Rabbits? Humpty Dumpty? A little blonde girl? Has "the master of disaster" blown his circuitry?

Not at all. Allen, the mastermind behind such "disaster" epics as *The Towering Inferno* and *The Poseidon Adventure*, feels very sound of mind these days and considers his four-hour CBS miniseries—a \$13 million musical adaptation of the Lewis Carroll classic, *Alice in Wonderland*—a potential blockbuster. But why (purists may persist) is the dynamic showman staging such a drastic departure from a formula

that made him so successful?

One of the reasons, according to Allen, is that his latest production isn't that much of a departure. "*Alice in Wonderland*, like all fairy tales has, strangely enough, violence, fire, floods, goblins, haunted houses—all the things that attracted me to disaster movies. And even though it's a fairy tale and we think it's quite beautiful, it certainly has these other elements."

When Allen speaks of this project it sounds as though the chance to adapt *Alice* has been a lifelong ambition. He recounts the history and popularity of the classic Carroll fable, first published in 1879, with a kind of wide-eyed fascination—a fascination he finds irrefutably justified. "*Alice in Wonderland* is by research the third best-seller in all publishing history," he explains. "The first is *The Bible*, the second are the works of Shakespeare, and the third is *Alice in Wonderland*. They estimate there's been a half-billion readers of *Alice* over the

106-year period. Anything that's been that well read, you've got a fighting chance of having a good presold audience, and everybody looks for a good presold audience."

Though the production is an adaptation of what is essentially a children's story, the strong fantasy overtones of the fable afforded Allen—a true progenitor of the modern multi-million-dollar film spectacle—the chance to flex his muscles. He insists the film's effects are all "the very latest state of the art," while the cast, a conglomeration of stars on a par with the most lavish of Allen's disaster romps, is pure Tinseltown glitter, including Red Buttons, Carol Channing, Ann Jillian, Sid Caesar, Ernest Borgnine, Shelley Winters, Ringo Starr, Scott Baio, Lloyd Bridges, Telly Savalas, Jonathan Winters, and a youngster by the name of Natalie Gregory whom Allen just happens to believe is "a phenomenon if there ever was one."

With a cast of this caliber, a script written by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paul Zindel (*The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds*), and 19 songs composed by comedian Steve Allen

## Through the Looking Glass with the Master of Disaster

By Ken Speranza

(who also stars in the film), Irwin Allen finds it hard to be anything but euphoric about his latest venture. "It's a pure musical, and it's certainly the first musical I've ever done," he chirps. "It's a kind of conglomeration of many good things, and when put together we think we've got an all-family audience." But will such an effects-laden musical version, with all its pomp and glitz, be tampering much with the original Carroll story? "We took very little license there," Allen assures. "The purists will not be disappointed, because it is essentially the story of *Alice in Wonderland* and it does basically follow all of her adventures and all of the characters."

When the film does set sail before the world, its voyage will be an active one. Columbia Pictures Television is distributing the picture domestically, while Warner Brothers will handle the film's theatrical distribution abroad and video release. And if the miniseries attracts a large audience—and the networks display enough interest—Allen says he would not be adverse to putting *Alice* before TV viewers on a regular basis. "Whether it leads to a series or not remains to be seen," cautions Allen, a veteran of the schizophrenic television industry. "If the audience is receptive, and if after meetings with the networks there is a need for *Alice* as a series, we think it'd be a wonderful series." If a network series deal is hammered out, Allen's return to episodic TV would be right on schedule—the New York City born-and-bred producer has been doing a perpetual dance between the big and small screens for over 30 years.

## Station to Station

A Columbia University journalism major and one-time operator of a literary agency, Allen began his production career writing and directing radio and television programs for local stations in Hollywood. In 1951 he produced his first theatrical film, a coproduction for the Howard Hughes-owned RKO studios titled *Double Dynamite*, which starred Groucho Marx, Jane Russell, and Frank Sinatra. In 1953 Allen produced an Academy Award-winning documentary, *The Sea Around Us*, which he also scripted and directed. After a few more grand-scale semi-documentaries and nature films, Allen produced the first of his science fiction and fantasy efforts, *The Lost World* (1960), followed in quick succession by two more genre films, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1961) and *Five Weeks in a Balloon* (1962). But in 1964 television beckoned again and Allen answered the call, developing *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* into a series for Twentieth Century Fox, then conceiving and producing two more series, *The Time Tunnel* (1967) and *Land of the Giants* (1968), for the ABC network and one, *Lost in Space* (1965), for CBS.

By the '70s, Allen again turned his energies to the big screen, this time to produce the suspenseful oceanliner drama *The Po-*

*seidon Adventure* (1972) and the even more spectacular *The Towering Inferno* (1974). These two films established Allen as Hollywood's "master of disaster" and initiator of a craze that would ultimately have moviegoers lining the streets. For the rest of the decade Allen divided time between exploiting this genre (*The Swarm*, 1978; *Beyond the Poseidon Adventure*, 1979; *The Day the World Ended*, 1979) and producing made-for-TV adventure films and pilots for TV series.

With the magnitude of the *Alice in Wonderland* project, Allen has the chance for a forceful return in the wake of disaster-era burnout. His long and varied career—exasperating, often rewarding ("more than 25 years of career [and] thousands of effects" is the way he describes it)—has had an even measure of successes and failures. Although he refuses to favor any one project or single out specific actors, directors or technicians for accolades ("If I mention 20 people for you I've left out 400"), he does occasionally bask in the pride of a certain few accomplishments. The disaster genre is one of them. "From *The Towering Inferno*, there's a law in 27 states where they have a sign at the elevator, usually on the first floor: 'In the Event of Fire, Do Not Use These Elevators,' " the producer says. "There were many laws passed immediately after *The Poseidon Adventure* in

which they doubled and tripled up on lifeboat inspection and also about the way cargos were weighed down in the holds. All attributable to the two pictures."

## High on Action

Allen is the first to admit that the bulk of his films—on the small or big screen—work far better on a physical/emotional level than a cerebral one. Entertainment and large audience appeal have always been his primary goals, he says, and those searching for allegorical concepts or profound messages would do best to look elsewhere. Allen's four major television series give some of the greatest testimony to his brand of filmmaking. High on action and colorful effects, these shows took occasional slogging from the critics but garnered sizeable ratings and stables of enthusiastic fans, not to mention a few Emmy awards. "They gave audiences what they wanted," Allen says simply, perhaps as a jab to those critics who dismissed his work as commercial and derivative. "All these shows had long and healthy runs."

*Lost in Space*, the comedy-adventure series that became Allen's best remembered show, remains a frequent source of rumors for big screen revivals, a concept that Allen

*continued on page 168*

*Irwin Allen's trip down the rabbit hole features one of his trademark all-star casts, including (right) Ann Jillian, Robert Morley, Carol Channing, and (below) newcomer Natalie Gregory as Alice.*



Courtesy CBS

Jerry Fitzgerald



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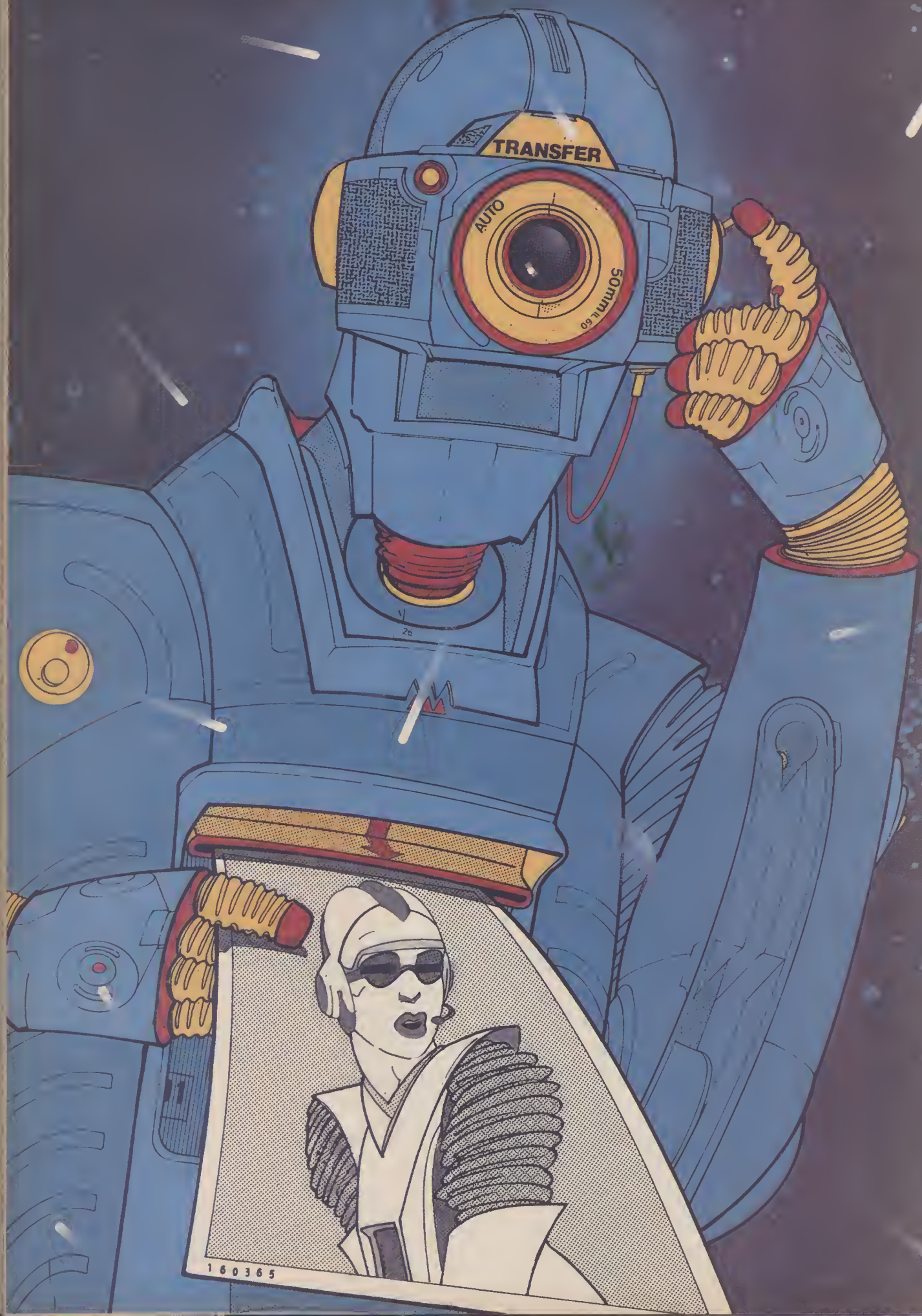
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# VIDEO SNAP SHOTS

BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

**E**ver since the days of photographic pioneers like Niepce, Daguerre, and Fox-Talbot, the mainstay of photography has been film—a transparent medium coated with a layer of light-sensitive chemicals that can be processed to produce either a positive or negative image.

Film held a monopoly on the photographic process until the mid-'50s, when videotape finally became a practical means of recording electronically created images from TV cameras. Before that, preserving a program for later viewing had to be done by photographing the TV picture on film, a process called "kinescoping." When those 80 or so episodes of Jackie Gleason's *The Honeymooners* start airing on Showtime this fall, they'll have a different look from the episodes you've split your sides laughing over before. That's because these newly shown episodes are all from kinescopes—filmed copies of shows shot with video cameras, instead of directly on film, as the more familiar episodes were shot.

Over the decades videotape has evolved as an alternative to motion-picture film for a lot of uses—mostly as a cheaper means of recording TV shows. Lately, of course, the appearance of inexpensive Beta and VHS home VCRs has forced an almost terminal decline in the sales of super-8 movie cameras. Chances are that the introduction of 8mm video (yes, the tape is the same width as the film) camcorders from Kodak, Polaroid, G.E., Sony, Sanyo, and Fuji will kill off interest in 8mm movies for all but diehard film users.

## Shooting Spree

But while making moving pictures electronically is rising in popularity, the multi-formatted legions of still photographers aren't being threatened—yet. All those Hasselblads, Nikons, Canons, and Kodaks (millions of the latter) are safe, and demand for 120 roll film, 35mm magazines, and 126, 110, and disc cartridges is actually on the rise as more people than ever choose to stick a plastic-coated slice of life

into albums, frames, and photo cubes.

Film-based still photography thrives because it's cheap. How can you argue with the economics of a 110 Instamatic or disc camera that sells for 20 bucks or less and can deliver a dozen or more processed photos for less than \$5? Too impatient for even the ubiquitous one-hour photo places? Then get a Polaroid or Kodak instant camera instead. Pictures from them cost about a buck a shot, a little higher if you use a flashbulb. If you want a little better quality, you can step up to a 35mm camera. The latest models do everything—load the film, wind it to the next picture, set the exposure, focus, and unwind the film. These automatic features rely heavily on sophisticated electronic circuits and motors that are built into the camera. Everything is electronic, in fact, except the film—but even that may soon change. Electronic still cameras may be just around the corner provided a few problems can be ironed out first.

Problem number one is technical. An electronic camera is much like a conventional still camera, except that instead of film, it has an electronic imaging device like a CCD (charge coupled device) pickup, almost identical to the ones you'll find on the latest video cameras. But that's only half the story. While regular film can receive the image from the lens in the same way that an electronic pickup does, film also serves as the storage medium. The latent image created in the brief exposure when the shutter opens and closes can remain on the film for quite awhile before it has to be developed. And while you can even store it indefinitely under the right conditions, in practice the latent image is much more vulnerable and can be adversely affected by high temperatures, accidental exposure to strong light, or faulty processing.

But an electronic camera needs something more—just as a home VCR needs videotape, on which electronic pulses from the imaging device are stored as long magnetized diagonal strips created by the video heads as they sweep across the moving tape. As everyone remotely involved in

Istvan Banyai

## STATUS REPORT STILL PHOTOGRAPHY GOES ELECTRIC

video knows, a single image or "frame" is recorded in one second. Or, if you prefer, one-half second—the time it takes to record a single video "field," consisting of 262-1/2 lines of video information. On playback, it's possible to stop the tape for a minute or two and study a single image. Wouldn't it be possible, therefore, to construct a smaller, more compact magnetic medium to record these shorter slivers of time, in the form of an electronic still camera?

## Disko Fever

That's exactly what Sony did a few years ago with its Mavica (MA-gnetic VI-deo CA-mera) system. But instead of using videotape, along with the cumbersome and complicated method of helical scanning, Sony chose to store the signals onto a miniature diskette, similar to the kind that's now become the standard means of recording the bits and bytes of digital computer data with the Apples, Commodores, IBMs, and Macintoshes that have become the latest in high-tech yuppie status symbols.

The SLR-sized Mavica camera takes either 50 "field" color pictures or 25 frame pictures on a pocket-size (2-3/8 by 2-1/8 by 1/8 inches) hard-shell "Mavipak" diskette. The latter is about half the size of the digital data diskette Sony also invented, and which is currently being used by Apple's Macintosh computer and Hewlett Packard's PC compatible. But while the medium is essentially the same, the data recorded is analog video, not digital. Unlike photographic film, which has a restricted shelf-life and can deteriorate if not developed within a predetermined period of time, Mavica's electronic latent images will keep indefinitely, or until you're ready to view them. There's no processing required. To view your finished electronic snapshots, just slip the Mavipak into a Mavica viewer connected to a TV or monitor and browse through them. Each of the 50 frames can be accessed randomly and displayed in any order the viewer wants. But since you can't paste that electronic image into an album or mail it to Grandma, Mavica also provides a Mavigraph printer. It can produce a three-by-four-inch color picture in about a minute.

Inside the printer, a roll of heat-sensitive printing paper is wound over a cylindrical roller called a "platen." A thermal printing head makes contact with the platen so that the paper and each of four different color dye sheets (yellow, magenta, cyan, and black) are passed over the finished image. The video signals from the diskette vary heat intensity applied to the print head. The result is a high-quality color picture—a Mavigram. And that's something that you can mail to Grandma. Want an extra one for Aunt Sadie? It's as close as a press of a button. No more smudged negatives or tiny thumbnail-size re-order numbers that you can see only with a magnifying glass. And if the colors aren't quite what you



*The Sony Mavica camera and lenses, Mavipak disks, and Mavigraph color video printer*

wanted on the first print, it's easy to vary them electronically on the next.

While designed to complement the Mavica camera, Sony's Mavigraph printer will also work with virtually any other still-frame video image, including those taken by other cameras or from VCRs or computer displays. And Mavica's electronic imaging creates other capabilities. With an accessory copier, extra diskettes can be made as easily as you can copy a videocassette. With an accessory Mavipak transmitter, images can also be transmitted over phone lines anywhere in the world. All that is needed on the other end is a companion receiver, monitor, or another Mavigraph "hard copy" printer.

All this technology is out of the lab and ready to go. But while testing, improving, and standardizing the product continues, there's been no rush to get it into stores. Two years ago, at about the same time that the Japanese electronics community was setting the standards for 8mm, it also established the basics of a common format for electronic still photography. Many of the system's parameters closely follow those of Sony's Mavica prototype, so that if and when electronic still cameras (ESCs?) get to stores, there will be compatibility between products made and sold by Sony, Panasonic, Canon, Fuji, Hitachi, and whatever other companies enter the field.

Sony hasn't been alone in developing video products designed to capture or display a single image. Mitsubishi's \$390 P-50U Video Printer offers another way to obtain a hard-copy print out of any video

still frame. The printer has a 16-foot remote control cord that lets you freeze an image and print out one or more 3-15/16 by 3-5/6-inch black & white images in less than 15 seconds. Or, if you like, you can reverse the image for better legibility. The pictures are printed on an \$18 roll of thermal paper (with room for about 200 snaps), but are more sepia-toned than black & white. And being heat-sensitive, they have a tendency to fade if exposed to strong light.

More recently, Mitsubishi has demonstrated another application for the printer. By connecting it to a small black & white camera built into your front door, it will take a picture of anyone who rings the doorbell, so that someone inside the house can view the picture (which takes about 15 seconds to print) before deciding whether to admit the guest. Mitsubishi has a color version of the same printer, which it hopes to begin selling before the end of the year.

Another player in the electronic still-frame business could be Hitachi, which as recently as last January demonstrated its Mavica-compatible ESC system, consisting of a camera, playback adapter, video floppy recorder, and color printer. Unlike Sony's CCD Mavica, Hitachi's camera uses an MOS imager but offers about the same level of convenience. The color video printer can provide high-quality hard copies from a variety of video signal sources in about a minute, each 3 by 4-inch print offering 64 contrast levels and a resolution of 153 dots per inch. So far, at least, no avail-

*continued on page 170*



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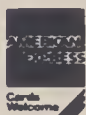
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# V I D E O T E S T S

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**Sony Access 301 Audio/Video System**

**RCA CLR200 'Pro Wonder' VHS Camcorder/Player**

**Akai VS-616U VHS Hi-Fi/MTS VCR**

**RCA MVR975HR 'Convertible' MTS/Hi-Fi VCR**

## *Sony Access Audio/Video System*



With the simple name Access 301, Sony has taken several giant strides in integrating high quality audio and video equipment into a single system.

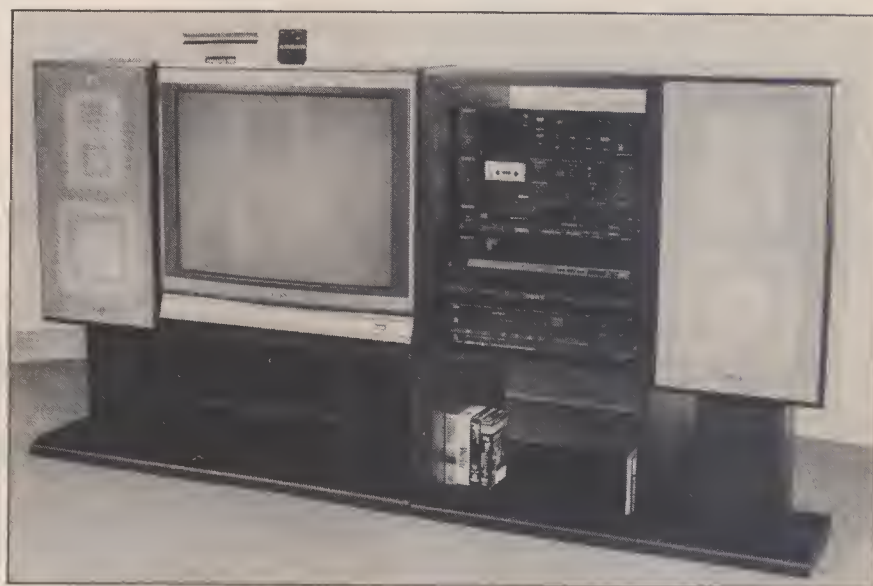
Access 301 also introduces Sony's first 27-inch monitor and first unified control system. In addition, many earlier Sony audio and video products may be integrated into the system, including some from as far back as 1983.

No other system manufacturer has made one that is compatible with earlier models. If you own an SL-2700 or SL-2710 from 1983 or other '84 and '85 models, you don't have to buy a new VCR for this integrated system. Just plug in the one you already own.

The Access 301 consists of a KX-M270 Trinitron Monitor, an AV-U270 A/V Receiver/Controller, an RM-U270 Access Commander, a TC-U270 Cassette Deck, a CPD-70 Compact Disc Player, a PS-FL711 Turntable, two APM-X300 Speakers, two SS-S270 Surround Speakers, a SU-S270 Tower Rack, a SU-M270 TV Stand, and two WS-X300 Speaker Stands. An SL-HF600 SuperBeta Hi-Fi VCR is recommended for mating with the system, but many others will do including the SL-HF400 we tried. The System price is \$3,599.95.

If you already have most of the above and don't want to duplicate, Sony also offers a stripped-down version, Access 201. The cheaper system, without a cassette deck, CD player, and turntable, and with less sophisticated speakers, will run you about \$1600. With a stripped-down 20-inch monitor, Access 101 goes for about \$1500.

The heart of the 301 is the AV-U270 receiver/controller. It holds the TV tuner, the AM/FM tuner, the audio pre-amplifier and amplifier, the switching system, and



Les Morsillo

the control center. It also contains the surround sound decoder and amplifier to drive the rear speakers. It receives IR wireless commands from the remote control and directs commands to the entire system except for the VCR.

It will tune up to 131 TV frequencies directly, 10 radio stations (AM, FM, or a mix), and three simulcast presets (TV video plus FM audio), all accessible at the touch of a button. It will also mix any video source with any audio source. Presetting the scan sequence combinations must be done at the controller in a compartment occupying the left third of the front panel, which is covered by a smoke-gray glass door.

A 10-digit membrane keypad controls FM simulcast, FM Antennas A and B, AM, Tuning +/-, Memory, Erase, Add, Enter, TV antenna A B/Aux, Cable (sequence) on/off, MTS Main/SAP/Both, TV and FM Mono forced for noise reduction, and Bass and Treble +/- . Two rotary controls balance the stereo and surround sound (rear).

An IR sensor, and indicators for IR command received and Standby (plugged in) are also on hand. Almost all other features may be controlled by the remote.

A number of controls duplicate those on the remote. But to the right of a System power button and a headphone jack are three controls not on the remote: for Surround on, Simulated stereo, and Off for both options. The right half of the controller has a large display above buttons for Tape, CD, FM/AM, Phono, TV, Video 1, Video 2 and Mix (audio and video sources). Further right are TV channel +/- tuning; Simulcast 1, 2 and 3; FM/AM +/- tuning; volume +/-; and Mute.

The rear panel holds the forest of jacks and connectors that you would expect. The unusual ones are a 200-watt switched AC outlet for the monitor, terminals for surround sound speakers, the System Control jack for a special tape recorder, and Control S output for the components.

The options are too numerous to detail fully. The only shortcoming that might in-

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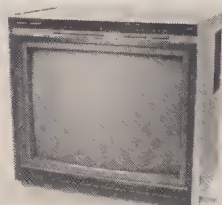
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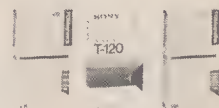
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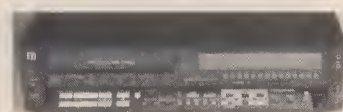
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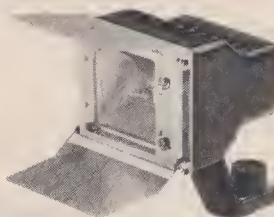


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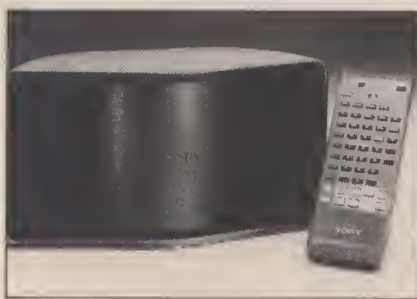
For additional information, circle No. 54 on Reader Service Card.

## Videotests

fluence a video buff is that the VCR outputs are only connected to Video 1. Video 2 connections are for input only; for example, a videodisc player or a videocassette player. We also wished there had been a Video 3 and a Video 4. That's not as ridiculous as it sounds. Some video buffs want room for a Beta, a VHS, an 8mm, and a LaserVision player.

**The Remote Commander.** Like the Controller, the Remote commander is one of the few system components not available separately. It might even seem small compared to some single function remotes. Two groups of buttons handle many different functions. One segment consists of the 10-digit keypad and the four buttons for Display, Enter, Antenna/Aux., and MTS. A switch near the front of the unit changes the control made from TV to Video or AM/FM. Another small group may be used for the tape transport of either the VCR or the audio tape deck.

Furthest forward are a Commander off (battery saver) switch and a System off button that turns off with a single push. Down the left side are buttons for Mix, Phono, Tape, FM/AM, TV, Video 1, Video 2, Muting, Volume +, and Volume -. Next to the Phono selector are buttons to Start, Stop and raise the needle. Next to the CD selector are buttons for Play, track advance Reverse and Forward, and Stop. Next to the Tape button are buttons for



Sony Access 301 Remote

Rewind, Play Forward, Fast Forward, Record, Play Reverse, Stop, Pause, and Record Mute (a silence lasting four seconds between segments on audio tape recorders).

Next comes the keypad group. Next to the volume buttons are others for Video 1, FM/AM, FM Simulcast, and TV Channel. On the rear of the unit is a VTR 1/VTR 2 selector for machines with selectable command or VTR 2 structures. Most half-inch VCRs understand VTR 1 code; 8mm systems understand VTR 2 code. A few are switchable. The remote is powered by two penlight batteries.

**The Monitor.** So far, consumer video has seen monitor/receivers and monitors with speakers and amplifiers. But rarely do monitors simply display the picture as professional monitors. This does just that: display a picture, nothing else. It has square

corners, measures 27 inches diagonally, and uses a fine pitch (0.73mm) microblack tube like others in the XBR series. At the back are an AC cord and a video input. At the front is a power switch and controls for Sharpness, Brightness, Color, Hue, and Picture. That's it. It offers the picture quality of the XBR series we raved about in the February 1985 issue of VIDEO. By itself it would earn a glowing review. Here, we mention it as one among many exciting components.

**The Speakers.** A bit too large for bookshelves, Sony supplies stands to bring the 301's three speakers to the same height as the other components. Each speaker uses three drivers with shielded magnets to power a 42.2 square-inch APM woofer, an 8.5 square APM mid-range, and a 2-inch ceramic tweeter. Each speaker can handle up to 100 watts but 50 is recommended. The grille may be removed to expose the three matte and shiny silver speakers otherwise only partially visible.

**The Cassette Deck.** While the Access 301 system is compatible with many remote-controlled audio cassette decks made in the last three years, one is made especially for this system in the U.S.: the TC-U270. It takes power and all of its signals from the receiver/controller through a multi-wire flat ribbon cable. You may use Type I (ferric), Type II (CrO<sub>2</sub>), or Type IV (metal), and tape in it with Dolby B, Dolby

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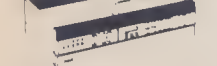
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C, or no noise reduction. It automatically senses tape type and switches for the correct bias and equalization. It records and plays in either direction, and will record a four-second silence between selections at the touch of a button. C-120 cassettes are not recommended.

**The CD Player.** By now even the most dedicated videophiles have heard about compact discs (CDs). These laser-read digital discs give the highest quality sound for mass distributed music. Sony includes one of its middle-of-the-line players, the CDP-70. When using CDs, the playback qualities are equivalent between players. Middle grade in this context refers to the number and complexity of the features offered. Included here are the standard next track forward or reverse, memory, repeat, and a powered slide-out disc drawer.

**The Turntable.** For those whose audio recordings are on phonograph records, Sony includes a front-loading, linear tracking turntable that will play 33-1/3 rpm (LP) or 45 rpm discs. You can start, stop, or pause your records from the remote as well as mix this audio source with any video source for mixed-source entertainment.

The discs are placed onto a platter that slides in and out at the touch of a button.

**VCRs.** VCRs must be purchased separately. Over seven models may be used under Access controls, and the SL-HF600 is recommended. We used both an SL-HF900 (tested last month) and an SL-HF400. Both worked superbly. We also used signals supplied by a Sony industrial Laser Disc Player. Sony does have a consumer Laserdisc player but not in this country at present.

**Other Components.** Sony also supplies an equipment rack, and a Monitor and speaker stands. The woodwork comes knocked down but is easy to assemble. All you need is a Phillips screwdriver. For best results use the included wrench to tighten the screws and nuts firmly, and don't be tempted to leave off the back of the equipment rack; it's needed for stability. Rear speakers are also supplied, along with all cables. You will have a few extra remotes from VCRs and other add-ons.

**Performance.** Each audio component (tape, phono, and CD) performed typically for that format with no significant deviation from competitively priced products.

However, they are special because they respond to the Access System commands.

The monitor is a new wonder performer. It delivers over 400 lines of horizontal resolution from video sources. Video S/N at the green gun of the picture tube was 55+ dB. Its microblack screen enhances contrast and its Colorpure filter and automatic circuitry help to produce a picture competitive with its cousins, the XBR series monitor/receivers. Our one regret is that its picture quality controls cannot be accessed from the remote.

The Access Receiver/Controller delivers the full range of audio frequencies between components. It is rated to deliver 40-20,000 Hz to the front speakers at 55 watts—and does. On video, it is rated for and delivers 330 lines of horizontal resolution from RF sources. It is rated to deliver up to 450 lines from video sources. We verified that up to 400 lines, not above, because of equipment limitations.

The Remote Commander deserves special praise because of its size and flexibility. Being able to select and mix sources and have simulcast presets is wonderful. Control of the individual components is func-

#### Test Report: Sany Access 301

##### DATA

**Date of test:** August 1985

**Suggested retail price:** \$3600

##### KX-M270 Access Monitors

**Picture tube:** Fine Pitch (0.73mm) Microblack Trinitron, 27-inch measured diagonally, 110° deflection angle

**Horizontal resolution:** RF IN: 330 lines; Video IN: 450 lines

**Dimensions:** 26-3/4 x 24-1/8 x 21-1/2 inches (h/w/d)

**Weight:** 109 lbs., 13 oz.

**Accessory:** VMC-1S video cable

##### AV-U270 Receiver/Controller

###### Amplifier

**Power Output RMS:** 55 watts per channel driven into 8 Ohms from 40Hz to 20kHz

**Harmonic distortion:** 0.08%

**Speaker impedance:** 8 Ohms

**AM/FM tuner:** AM: 530-1605kHz; FM: 88-108MHz

**AM/FM antenna:** FM: 75-Ohm, F-type (2); AM: 300-Ohm, ribbon-type

##### TV Tuner

**Sound system:** Built-in MTS decoder; NTSC standard with Dolby noise reduction

**Channel coverage:** VHF: 2-13; UHF: 14-69; CATV: 1-125

**TV antenna:** Combined CATV/VHF/UHF: 75-Ohm, f-type

**Antenna to Converter:** 75 Ohm, f-type; AUX: 75-Ohm f-type

##### General

**Power requirements:** 120V AC, 60Hz

**Power consumption:** 130 Watts (average), 5 Watts (standby)

**AC outlets:** Switched 200 Watts (1) for

monitor, switched 100 Watts (2)

**Dimensions:** 17 x 4-1/4 x 13-5/8 inches (h/w/d)

**Weight:** 18 lbs., 10 oz.

**Accessories:** RM-U270 Access Uni-Commander, AM ferrite bar antenna, FM ribbon-type antenna, external antenna connector, antenna splitter

##### TC-U270 Audio Cassette Recorder

**Type:** Single cassette with auto reverse

**Tape selection:** Automatic: Type I (normal), Type II (CrO2), Type IV (metal)

**Noise reduction:** Dolby B or C

**Dimensions:** 17 x 4-1/4 x 10-7/8 inches (h/w/d)

**Weight:** 7 lbs., 11 oz.

**Accessory:** Multi-pin cable (for connection to AV-U270)

##### CPD-70 Compact Disc Player

**Channels:** Two

**Frequency response:** 2Hz-20kHz, +/- 0.5dB

**Harmonic distortion:** Less than 0.003% at 1kHz

**Dynamic range:** Over 96dB

**Channel separation:** Over 95dB at 1kHz

**Wow and flutter:** Below measurable limits

**Power consumption:** 15 watts

**Dimensions:** 17 x 2-7/8 x 11-1/8 inches (h/w/d)

**Weight:** 9 lbs., 1 oz.

**Accessories:** 4-pin remote control cable, RK-74 audio cable

##### PS-FL7II Turntable

**Type:** Direct drive, front-loading player

**System:** Fully automatic

**Tonearm:** Linear tracking

**Cartridge:** MM-type (Moving Magnet), P-mount

**Weight:** 16 lbs. 9 oz.

**Accessories:** VL-45G cartridge, 4-pin remote control cable (to AV-U270)

##### APM-X300 Speakers

**Type:** 3-way, bass reflex

**Speaker units:** Woofer: 43.3 sq. in.

APM-type; Midrange: 8.2 sq. in. APM-type; Tweeter: 2" diameter ceramic-type

**Enclosure:** Baffled high density particle board with removable grille

**Impedance:** 8 Ohms

**Power handling:** 100 watts maximum, 50 watts recommended

**Dimensions:** 11-7/8 x 23-5/8 x 8-1/2 inches (h/w/d)

**Weight:** 19 lbs., 13 oz.

**Accessory:** Speaker wire (10 ft.)

##### SS-S270 Surround Speakers

**Type:** Single, full-range bass reflex

**Speaker unit:** 5" diameter cone-type

**Enclosure:** Horn-type design

**Impedance:** 8 Ohms

**Power handling:** 40 watts maximum

**Dimensions:** 11-7/8 x 6-3/8 x 5-1/8 inches (h/w/d)

**Accessories:** Speaker wire (33 ft.)

##### RESULTS & RATINGS

**Picture sharpness:** 400 lines, monitor; 330 lines, RF; more than 400 lines, video, receiver/controller

**Sharpness:** S/N, luminance: 55dB

**Accuracy of colors:** excellent

**Overall picture quality:** excellent

**Audio frequency response:** 20-20,000 Hz, system; 40-20,000 Hz, speakers

**Audio S/N:** 80-dB line outputs

**Total harmonic distortion:** less than 9.02%

**Overall audio performance:** excellent; speakers are the weakest link

**Ease of operation:** excellent (see text)

**Overall performance:** excellent





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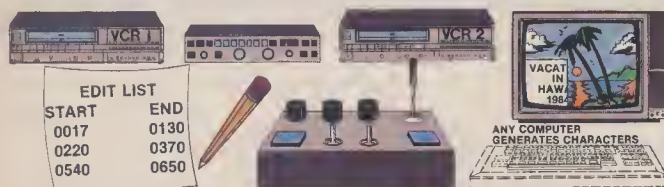


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- Make an edit list. On VCR 1 note the counter reading at the start and end of each "Highlight."
- Roll VCR 1 to 0017 and put in play/pause.
- Put VCR 2 in record/pause. On Hybrid, press Fade/in.
- Select a blue fade or wipe button on Hybrid (or a combination of buttons to build compound wipes). Practice the effect by pressing Fade button in and out. Then fade out.
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- At 0130 fade Hybrid out, pause 2, pause 1, advance 1 to 0220.

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• **Translucency Controls** brightness of all areas outside of Spotlight.

• **Horizontal and Vertical** Use to "shape" a spotlight.

• **Auto/Manual Switches** select Auto/Manual operation of wipes.

• **A/B Switch** (remoted).

1/2 ELAPSED TIME METER

0:08

PAUSE

RF OUTPUT

COLOR BALANCE

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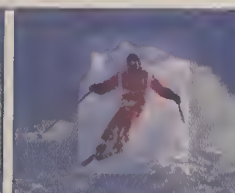
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Zip Stick Controller

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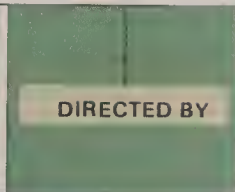
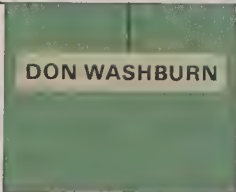
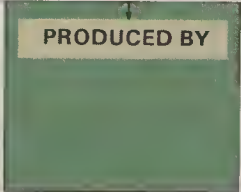
## Zipstick Controller Adds 4 More Unique Effects (optional)

**(1) Spotlighting** It's a bright frame. **How it works:** You manually converge wipes to form a spotlight, any shape. "Translucency" control reduces brightness of all areas outside the spotlight for proper contrast. Zipstick zips spotlight around the screen to highlight the person or object you desire.



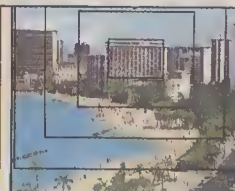
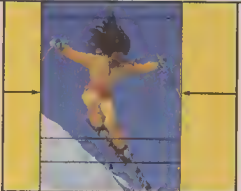
Use spotlighting to single out and highlight a person or object with a field of light.

**(2) Scrolling** It's a thin bright frame surrounded by color. **How it works:** Your Zipstick scrolls the frame down the screen to expose your credits. Use with camera and easel.



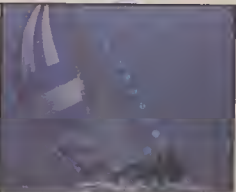
Scrolling is a good way to display credits. Use your camera and easel.

**(3) Targeted Converge** Presto! A wipe box shrinks to any target you choose left or right of center screen. **How it works:** Select a target center with Zipstick. V, on Manual. H, on Auto. Then turn Translucency to black, as you press Fade.



End your tape by converging to any dramatic event.

**(4) Bouncing Ball Effect** A tiny bright ball; an electronic pointer. **How it works:** Zipstick zooms ball around screen as you point out details. Usually used with VCR in freeze frame or live with camera.




Use bouncing ball to point out a particular feature or detail. Especially good for fine details.



## Videotests

tional, but at times we wanted to do more. For now we will say it is among the best available.

**Conclusion.** At almost half the cost of a Dimensia system (two-thirds when you add the cost of a VCR), the Access 301 system is very attractive. It also competes very well with the systems offered by Pioneer and Technics, the other top system competitors. Each has restrictions on which components may be used, but Sony takes the prize for the widest range of options. As our Eyes-On monitor shootout

shows (VIDEO, June 1985), choosing monitors is a matter of personal taste as much as performance specifications. We are partial to the picture the KX-270 monitor delivers. If you are even vaguely considering a system you must see this one. If you already have a system or want to build one piece at a time, you might consider either the monitor (available separately) or the basic Access 201 system. We recommend the Access 301 and its components highly. 

## RCA VHS Camcorder



RCA's CLR200 is not the first full-sized VHS camcorder to appear but it is lighter, more convenient, and easier to use than the competing

Matsushita-built models. It takes VHS camcorders a step forward.

The first thing you notice is that the cassette hatch is on the outer side, so if you accidentally hit Eject the hatch won't slap you in the face. The second is that there are no hidden compartments. The VCR controls for Play are on top of the body. The strap attaches to the top and bottom of the back so it is carried with the lens pointed downward. This may not seem important at first, but it is very convenient. You don't have to remove the strap from your shoulder to raise the camera.

All the controls you need to reach, except the Power and Eject buttons, are either on the side of the camera that faces you or on the hand-grip. You can see them with a quick glance. In the automatic mode you can ignore them completely. The electronic viewfinder (EVF) is small but magnified by a focusing eyepiece. The frame is uncluttered by indicators except for VCR Record/Pause. The indicator blinks when the battery has only five minutes of power left. The camcorder offers all the operating ease of point-and-shoot video recording.

**Description.** The compact Pro Wonder weighs just 5.4 pounds without battery and cassette and about 7 pounds with a one-hour battery and T-120 cassette. It is styled in gray and black and is 7-7/16 inches high by 6-7/16 inches wide by 13-15/16 inches deep. The attachable carrying handle adds another 2 inches.

The camera controls are arranged in two rows on the left side. In the top row are the auto/manual white Balance switch, manual white Balance control with a continuous range, and the Review button that lets you view the last few seconds of the previous take. The auto white balance continually adjusts to changing lighting conditions.

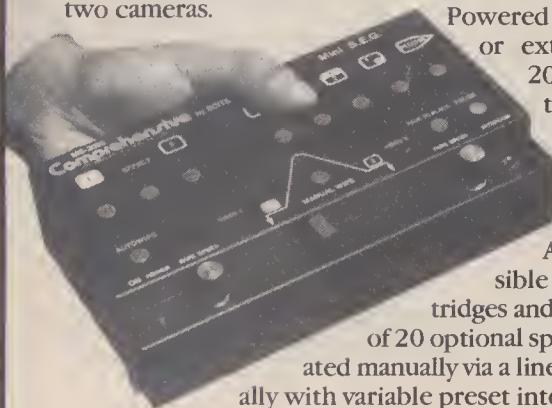
The auto focus switch with positions for auto, manual, and push-to-focus one-shot auto modes is in the lower row. Next are the normal/gain up Sensitivity switch and the Standby/Normal battery saver switch. Above the Review button is a three-LED battery condition indicator. Near the rear is a catch to release the slide-on battery. You can also reach the focus ring and zoom lever for manual operation, but a catch must be released on the zoom lever to move into the macro range.

On the opposite side of the camera is the handgrip with the Run/Pause and power zoom controls. A security strap runs

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## Videotests



around the back of your hand for safety and support. Along the bottom edge, under the cassette hatch, are jacks for AV out, earphone, and Record/Pause remote. There's also a control to adjust playback tracking.

Across the top front of the camcorder is the EVF. A focusing eyepiece magnifies its 2/3-inch screen. Underneath are screwdriver controls for brightness, contrast and electronic focus. They should rarely need adjustment. On top, a slider lets you position the viewing hood so the viewfinder will slide away from your hip when you sling the camcorder over your shoulder. At the front the viewfinder has a detachable electret condenser microphone. When removed you can plug in an external mic like RCA's optional wireless.

The viewfinder is electrically connected to the camcorder by a 12-pin plug on a short cable just above the handgrip. You may plug an optional audio/video input adapter into the same socket. That gives the CLR200 a big advantage over Matsushita-built, full-sized camcorders that cannot record from an external audio/video source.

If you record from an external A/V source the EVF stays disconnected so you'll need to use the AV output to monitor your work. You may also attach another useful accessory at this connector, the optional Character Generator. It has an alphanumeric keyboard and a memory for up to 20 pages of titles to recall at will.

At the back of the camcorder are grooves for the battery. A one-hour battery is supplied. A two-hour version is optional. The AC adapter slides into the same grooves and has a flip-down support for stability. The adapter can charge the one-hour battery in about an hour and the two-hour unit in a little over two hours.

A Power switch and a Camera/Charge

switch are atop the adapter. You must set the Camera/Charge switch for the correct function because the charger won't do both at once. Removing the battery or charger exposes a car cord jack. An optional Car Cord will power the camcorder from an automobile lighter socket or from one of the high-capacity accessory batteries available from RCA and others.

A non-slip pad keeps the camcorder from slipping off your shoulder and aids balance. On the top near the front is an accessory shoe into which the hand-grip may be fitted. A second shoe on top of the handle lets you still use your accessories. At the rear of the top panel are a Power button and a Camera/Playback selector. Nearer the front is the counter with Memory and Reset buttons. Two rows of playback controls are arranged in between. In the top row are the Rewind (Search), Pause, and Fast Forward (Search) buttons. The bottom row hosts buttons for Stop and Play. Between these and the power button is an Eject button.

**Operation.** Filming is a snap. Put in a battery, set the Camera/Playback selector to Camera, turn on the power, insert a cassette, set the Standby switch to On and all of the camera options to automatic, then point and shoot. You need only vary the zoom and start/stop recording. Focus is automatic; white balance is continuous and automatic. You may elect manual or one-shot automatic focusing, manual white balance, gain-up for low light, and review.

For playback, reset the selector to direct the power to the playback controls. You may feed audio and video to a monitor with the supplied cable or to a TV set through an optional RF adapter. One of our few criticisms is that the RF output adapter and the audio/video input adapter are not supplied, since this would raise the price of



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## Videotests

the machine slightly. RCA does have a point, though. You don't have to pay for them unless you need them.

**Performance.** The CLR200 is an SP only machine with a maximum of 2 hours and 40 minutes on one cassette. You don't have the economy of the slower speeds but you do get high quality recordings. Horizontal resolution was 250+ lines with a video S/N of 41.2dB, unweighted, and 44.6dB, weighted. Chroma AM S/N was 42.4dB and Chroma PM S/N was 45dB so the picture was quite good for signals sup-

### Test Report: RCA CLR200 "Pro Wonder" VHS Comcorder/Player

#### DATA

**Date of test:** August 1985

**Suggested retail price:** \$1500

**Weight:** 5.4 pounds without cassette and battery; approx. 7 pounds with battery and T-120 cassette

**Dimensions:** 7-7/16 X 7-7/16 X 13-15/16 inches (h/w/d)

**Power requirements:** 12VDC, 9.5W, VCR; 100-240VAC, 50/60 Hz, 27W, AC adapter

**Image sensor:** 1/2-inch Saticon

**Lens:** f1.2, 6X (8.5-51mm) power/manual zoom with macro range

**Filter diameter:** 46mm

**Minimum illumination:** 7 lux, rated

**Auto focus:** yes, switchable to manual with one-shot capability

**White balance:** continuous automatic, or manual with continuous range

**Iris:** automatic

**Sensitivity:** 2-position normal/gain-up

**Viewfinder:** 1/2-inch electronic with run/pause LED

**Viewfinder controls:** contrast, brightness and focus

**Auto fade:** no

**VCR controls:** all (on top panel)

**Microphone:** detachable electret condenser; external mic plugs into same jack

**Cable length:** none, unitized

**Plug:** not applicable

**Tape format:** VHS

**Tape speeds:** SP

**Play speed select:** not applicable

**Still frame:** yes

**Frame advance:** no

**Slow motion:** no

**Speed play:** no

**Rapid search:** see Cue & review

**Cue & review:** 3X using FF and Rew controls

**Visible FF and Rew:** no

**Fast Forward/rewind time:** about 6-3/4 minutes for T-120 cassette

**Remote pause:** yes

**Remote:** wired with Pause

**Separate eject:** yes

**Counter digits:** 4

**Counter memory:** yes

**Program start locator/index/cue:** no

**Audio dub:** no

**Video dub:** no

**Auto rewind:** no

**Stereo:** no

**Hi-Fi:** no

**Accessories:** lens cap, 1-hour battery, battery charger/AC adapter, audio/video connector cable, carrying handle, shoulder strap, and earphone are supplied. RF Adapter CRF010, Record Start/Stop Remote Switch CRM010, Long Play (2-hour) Battery CB120, Video/Audio Input Adapter VAA002, Character Generator CGA020, Lens Filter Kit LFK115, Carrying Case KK040, Wireless Microphone WM002, Wide Angle Adapter WAL01A, Lens Extender LX152A, and Film Slide Adapter FSA036A are optional

### RESULTS & RATINGS

**Horizontal resolution:** 240+ lines measured

**S/N, video luminance:** 41.2dB, unweighted; 44.6dB, weighted, measured

**S/N, chroma AM:** 42.4 dB from video input

**S/N, chroma PM:** 45dB from video input

**Audio frequency response:** 80-12,000Hz, -3dB, from line input

**S/N, audio:** 41dB from line input

**Audio distortion:** 2.2% from line input

**Overall picture quality:** very good

**Audio quality:** very good/excellent for linear

**Ease of operation:** excellent

**Overall performance:** very good/excellent

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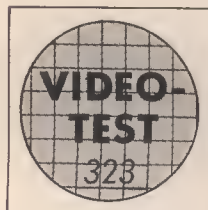


plied to the audio/video inputs. It is rated for a low light sensitivity of 7 lux and while you see a recognizable picture the contrast is low. A separate camera and recorder can do better but at a sacrifice of weight and convenience.

RCA offers only linear track audio recording so its frequency response is flat within 3dB from 80 to 10,000 Hertz with 41dB audio S/N from the audio/video inputs. Total harmonic distortion (THD) was 2.2 percent. Compared to the best linear-track audio the results were very good.

**Conclusion.** No camcorder we've seen equals the best of a separate camera and recorder. The CLR200, however, is close to the top. It is not as small as the Sony 8mm system nor is its audio as good but its picture is better. It is also lighter and arranged better than the Matsushita-built, full-sized camcorders, and it offers six to eight times as much recording time as VHS-C camcorders. It is priced at \$1500, a bit below many of its competitors. With all of these plusses and so few minuses, we recommend it highly. Camcorders are getting to be really exciting. ✓

## Akai Hi-Fi VCR with MTS



Akai is best known as an audio manufacturer but it also makes highly innovative video devices. Usually Akai offers only one or two models of a

product at the same time. However, its designs are well thought out and offer unusual features that are frequently copied. Its current top-of-the-line U.S. model is the VS-616U.

The 616 features the trendiest catch for the true TV buff—MTS (multi-channel television sound). Of course, the 616 also includes Hi-Fi capability. All of the displays have been moved to the screen to save precious front panel space. The result is an uncluttered VCR with no hidden compartments. Akai chose an elegantly simple solution. It enlisted six large buttons below the cassette hatch for multiple duty. In different models they set the clock, the timer and channel presets, select the channel, fine tune, adjust the tracking, reset the counter and select the display. Among other unusual features, it will record the time, date and channel at the head of the tape. Even better, it offers very good picture and sound.

**Description.** The VS-616U is black with touches of blue and silver. At 22 pounds its weight is in the middle of the range for table models. It measures 3.9 inches high by 17.3 inches wide by 14.5 inches deep. Remarkably, considering its wide range of features, there are no hidden

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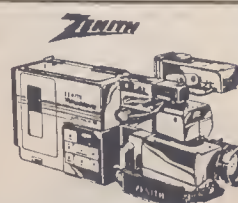


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#### ADJUSTOMATIC VT67A

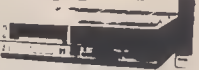
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## Panasonic



Integrated Remoteless Remote Control Answering Machine with Auto Dialer and Speakerphone.

## SONY



Sony SL-HF400 Front Load Beta Hi-Fi Video Cassette Recorder

• Ultra high fidelity audio recording playback • Cable-ready express tuning • Built-in stereo MTS tuner • Full function wireless remote • 7 day 6 event programmable • Beta Scan BetaScan search modes • 30 min. 1 hr.

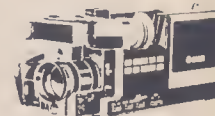


SONY BMC-550K Auto Focus Tubeless Betamovie

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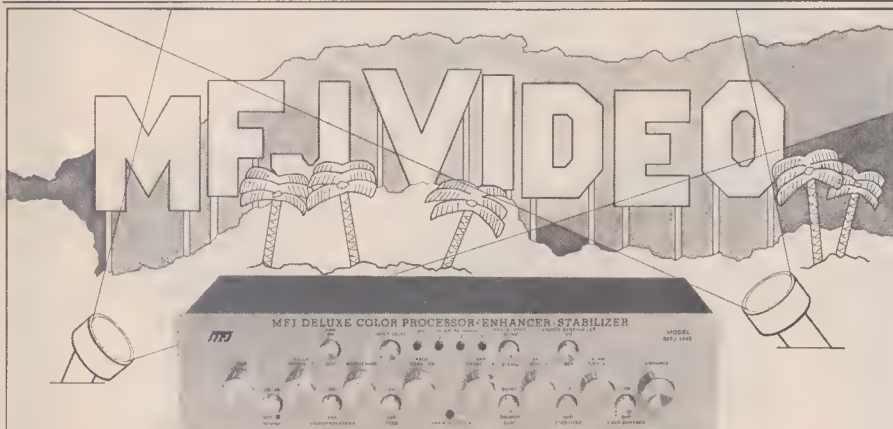
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## Videotests

compartments chock full of controls. But for two switches on the back all the controls are on the front panel.

The front panel groups its controls into three areas, more or less by function. The cassette hatch is at the top, just right of center. It has a smoked gray cover and an inside light that lets you see the cassette. The controls surround the hatch on three sides. On the right are the tape transport controls. The Play control is at the top. Right below is a Fast Forward/Rewind rocker that doubles as Search control. As usual we refer to this system as Cue and Review. The control is the locking type so you must press Play to resume the mode. Below the rocker is the Stop button. All the buttons are rather wide, with the lowest divided into two sections. The button on the left is for Pause/Still. The other is to Record.

Directly below the cassette hatch are a small display and some unusual buttons. The display shows either Channel Number or a four-digit counter. Time, timer, and function are relegated to on-screen display. To the right of the display are three buttons labelled Program, Clock and Preset, that act like a gear shift to regulate what the row of six buttons to their left will control. Those buttons are labelled with a minus sign, a plus sign, and arrows pointing to the left and right. The last two buttons have dots. If the function shift buttons are not depressed: the plus and minus buttons, labeled "A," step you between the channel presets; the left and right arrows, "B," control the fine tuning; the first dot, "C," selects the onscreen display; and the second dot, "D," resets the counter. If you select the Program mode the A buttons change the numerical value, B buttons move you back and forth between time settings, the C button memorizes your setting, and the D button erases the memory so you can start over with a clean slate.

If you select the clock function the buttons act as they do for Programming. If you select Preset you can use the plus and minus buttons to preset up to 16 channels, the arrows to search for stations, the C button to memorize your selection and the D button to cancel a previous selection. To the right are two other buttons. The upper button returns the tape counter to zero. The lower button, Mute, lets you record a four-second period of silence on the audio track that is useful when using the VCR for high quality audio-only recordings.

To the left of the hatch is another group of controls and a few indicators. At the far left, a Function button sits above the Timer button. Akai chooses to call it Function rather than Power because such buttons never really turn all of the power off. The clock, memory, and remote sensor circuitry, for example, stay on as long as the machine is plugged in. Over near the cassette hatch is the Eject button and another labeled Tape View that lights up the cassette compartment. Between those and



the ones at far left are four rows of buttons and indicators. The top row holds the TV/VCR output selector, a video indicator, and discrete indicators to tell you if Stereo and SAP are preset, and for Standby, SP, and SLP. There's also an SP/SLP selector switch. While the machine will play back LP tapes without special effects, it won't record at LP speed.

Part of the next row is occupied by the model number, followed by the IR wireless remote control sensor, the SAP record button, and the Hi-Fi selector and indicator. The next row consists of indicators. Two bar graphs show the recording level of the two sound channels: the indicators for the range from -20dB to 0dB are in green, from 0dB to +6dB in orange, and from 6dB to 16dB in red. Below, another indicator with bars from 1 to 9 shows where within the range the volume control is set. The control itself is an up/down rocker in the row below, where there is also a simulcast recording selector and a stereo headphone mini jack. On the pedestal near the left end is a soft/sharp picture control switch.

The rear panel is quite simple. In addition to the power cord at the lower left, there are inputs and outputs for VHF and UHF at the lower right plus the channel 3/4 RF output selector. Along the top right edge are RCA-type pin jacks for video and stereo audio input and output. You can leave the inputs connected and select simulcast recording by a switch on the front panel, and select external video and audio by cycling through the +/- channel selector until the prompt "EXT" appears on the screen. An unusual switch near this group of jacks is labelled B&W/Color. You are invited to move the switch to the B&W position when you record black and white material but we noticed little effect.

The black remote control is quite slim at 3/4 by 1-1/2 by 6-1/2 inches, yet it offers a wide range of functions. Its buttons are divided into two groups. The rear group has the transport function controls with an orange Pause/Still button and a recessed red record button. Unlike the deck, the fast forward and rewind controls are separate buttons rather than a rocker. In the forward group are orange-colored Function (power) and Timer buttons. Both are protected from accidental operation by ridges. The program button lets you set the timer's memory or operate the multi-function controls in their normal mode. The plus and minus buttons are replaced by a +/- rocker; the arrows are also combined into a rocker. The C and D buttons remain separate. Since there are no buttons to set the clock or presets you may not change those memories from the remote. The A rocker gives you channel selection, and the B control let you fine tune your selection.

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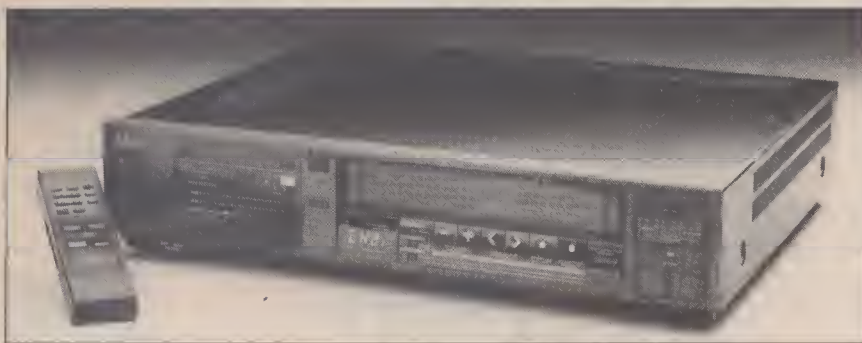
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## Test Report: Akai VS-616U VHS Hi-Fi

MTS VCR

**DATA**  
**Date of test:** August 1985  
**Suggested retail price:** \$899.95  
**Weight:** 22 pounds  
**Dimensions:** 3.9 x 17.3 x 14.5 inches (h/w/d)  
**Power requirements:** 120VAC, 60Hz  
**Power consumption:** 36W  
**Tape format:** VHS  
**Tape speeds:** SP, SLP, record; SP, LP, SLP, playback  
**Play speed select:** automatic  
**Still frame:** yes, except LP  
**Frame advance:** yes, using Pause/Still button  
**Slaw motion:** no  
**Speed play:** no  
**Rapid search:** see Cue & review  
**Cue & review:** 5X, SP, 15X, SLP  
**Visible FF and Rew:** no  
**Fast forward/rewind time:** 4 minutes for T-120 cassette  
**Remote pause:** no  
**Remote:** IR wireless  
**Separate eject:** yes  
**Counter digits:** four  
**Counter memory:** yes  
**Program start locator/index/cue:** no  
**Audio dub:** no  
**Video dub:** no  
**Auto rewind:** yes  
**Stereo:** yes  
**Hi-Fi:** yes  
**Tuning method:** frequency synthesis with 16 position memory  
**Channel selectors:** up (+) / down (-) scan on both VCR and remote  
**Preset method:** auto search/assign number/memorize using multifunction buttons  
**Tuning range:** 2 to I3, A-5 to A-1, A to I, J to W, AA to RR, 14 to 83  
**AFT:** always on  
**Channel lock:** yes  
**Timer:** 8 programs, 4 weeks, plus Sleep auto off timer  
**Auto channel-change:** yes  
**Battery backup:** 7 day for memories (clock, program and channel)  
**Accessories:** remote control and batteries, antenna cables and matching transformer

**RESULTS & RATINGS**  
**Horizontal resolution:** 250 lines, rated and measured, SP; 240 lines, SLP  
**S/N, video luminance:** 43dB, rated; 40.4dB, unweighted, 44.4dB, weighted  
**S/N, chroma AM:** 41.5dB  
**S/N, chroma PM:** 41.6dB  
**Audio frequency response:** 20-20,000Hz, rated, 20-20000Hz +3/-4.3dB (see text), measured, Hi-Fi; 70-10,000Hz SP, rated, 63-10,000Hz +/-6dB, 80-4000Hz +/-3dB, SP, 80-6300Hz +/-3dB, SLP, measured, linear  
**Dynamic range, Hi-Fi:** 80dB rated and measured  
**S/N, audio:** 39dB  
**Audio distortion:** less than 0.94%, Hi-Fi; 2.4%, linear  
**Overall picture quality:** Very good/excellent  
**Audio quality:** very good  
**Ease of operation:** very good with some reservation on setting channel presets  
**Overall performance:** very good

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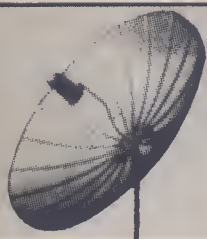
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## Videotests

back feature is that tracking is controlled by the left and right arrows. The simplified tape transport controls at the far right are convenient and easy to use. You soon get accustomed to the locking type search from which you press Play to escape. Your first few searches may overshoot what you're looking for but with practice you will grow accomplished at moving quickly to the exact spot you want. To set the clock and timer, you select the correct shift button and multi-function buttons. Setting the 16 channel presets is a bit harder and a bit restrictive if you have more than 16 favorite stations, though most people are content with fewer. A problem with presetting is that the station must be active when you preset. The seek mode for stations does not always home in on weak signals, so you must identify the station before you can assign it a channel number. Fortunately most people set their stations and never touch them again. The battery backup protects preset memories for up to seven days. At almost every step onscreen prompts tell you what buttons you need to press.

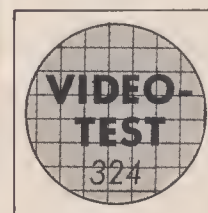
**Performance.** Picture quality is very good. Horizontal resolution was rated and measured at 250 lines in SP and is at least 240 at the other speeds. There is no LP recording or special effects on LP playback. Video S/N was rated at 43dB; we measured it at 40.4dB, unweighted, and at 44.4dB, weighted. Chroma AM S/N was 41.5dB and chroma PM S/N was 41.6dB.

Frequency response on Hi-Fi audio was a little less flat than we have been seeing but it still covered the entire frequency range within +3dB and -4.3dB. Other Hi-Fi performance characteristics were typical. Linear-audio frequency response at SP was 63 to 10,000 Hertz +/-3dB—better than rated—and at SLP it was 80 to 6300Hz at the 3dB points. Audio S/N on the linear tracks was 39dB.

Operating ease is marred only by the station preset and the organization of the manual. The manual would be acceptable with a clearer table of contents.

**Conclusion.** Akai's VS-616U is priced at \$899.95 and yet it offers almost everything the more expensive machines have. That makes it a good value. **V**

## RCA Hi-Fi VCR with MTS



RCA's "Convertible" VCRs have been popular because they offer the flexibility of a portable VCR plus the features of a top table model. They've

improved the basic plug-together design even further in this latest version, the MVR975HF. Equipped with an MTS tun-



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### FEATURES

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Stereo-Plex™ circuitry may be activated. It makes the program sound just like stereo, spreading it out to fill the room.

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I personally think it proper that the company that started *Good TV Listening* twelve years ago with the world's first Teledapter in 1972...the first TV Audio Tuner in 1974...and the first TV Power Amp in 1983, is first again with the universal stereo TV decoder.

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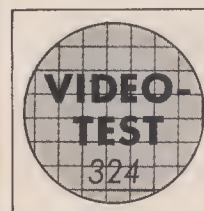
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TE-800

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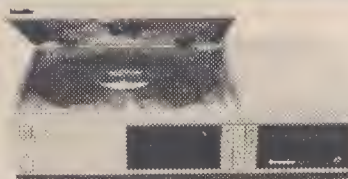
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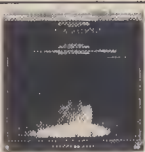
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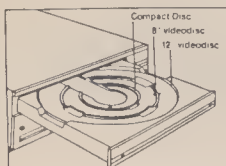


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## Videotests

er, it can be used as part of a Dimensia system and, best of all, the audio/video inputs and outputs have been moved to the back of the tuner-timer so you don't have to disconnect them every time you want to tote the portable VCR into the field.

It may seem funny to emphasize such a slight change as putting the A/V inputs and outputs on the TT, but if you had to connect and disconnect those plugs every weekend or sometimes twice in one weekend you'd start cussing too. Speaking from experience we really appreciate RCA's care. It is this attention to detail that makes the company a leader.

Dimensia is the name of the RCA super system we reviewed in March 1985. It was the first system to integrate a top monitor receiver, VCR, AM/FM tuner, audio cassette deck, CD player, audio amplifier, and speakers under a single remote control. It required the choice of a specific VCR—the VKT700, which did not offer portability. Since that system may be assembled a piece at a time, this new convertible gives you the option of portability and compatibility with Dimensia.

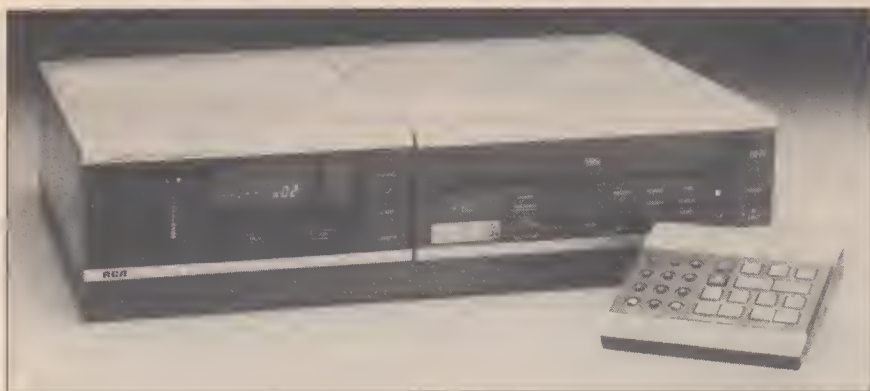
At 6.4 pounds without battery and cassette, this is probably the lightest, full-sized, separate portable. The battery is optional as is the video/audio adapter for access to inputs and outputs in the field. We wish they were supplied as part of the package, but RCA says that not everyone wants them and it would increase the cost of the basic package.

**Description.** The 975 is a warm silver-gray with a matte black front panel. Together, the VCR and Tuner-Timer (TT) are 4-1/8 inches high by 17-1/8 inches wide by 12-3/4 inches deep. The VCR, 3-3/4 inches high by 9-3/16 inches wide by 10-1/8 inches deep, slides out from top right leaving just the base and the 2-1/2-inch deep section of the TT into which it plugs. The VCR weighs 6.4 pounds without cassette and battery. The TT weighs 10.8 pounds so the total weight is just 17.2 pounds.

The cassette hatch takes up the full width of the VCR leaving a little under an inch of space unused on each side. On the lower half of the front panel at the far left is a multi-function LCD that monitors the counter/timer remaining function, the battery condition, speed, the 8-hour time remaining mode; and whether the Hi-Fi is on, the cassette is inside, and the memory is on. To the right are buttons for changing the indicator from counter to time remaining, turning on the memory, for resetting the counter, and for changing the time remaining counter for 8-hour tapes.

To their right are two tall buttons for Play and Pause/Still followed by six short buttons stacked three above three. The top row has Record, Rewind (Search), and Fast Forward (Search) buttons with Index, Audio Dub and Video Dub below. Then there is the Stop button with the Power button stacked above the Eject button at the right edge of the machine. Under the





lower lip of the front panel are a Tracking control, and switches for Auto Tracking on/off, Hi-Fi/Mix/Linear sound output, and SP/LP/SLP record speed select.

The panel on the right of the VCR is simple: all the audio/video inputs and outputs are on the back of the TT. You no longer have to connect and disconnect them when you use the VCR as a portable. There is an optional adapter to access the inputs and outputs in the field. What's left are an earphone jack, left and right microphone jacks, a 10-pin camera jack and a concentric connector for an external 12-volt power source. The only control is a knurled dial for Vertical Lock. On the left side are the battery compartment, battery eject button, and channel 3/4 RF output selector. On the rear are a 20-pin jack for connection to the TT, an F-connector for RF output, two holes for plug-centering pins, and a cover to keep dirt out of the connectors.

The front panel of the TT is equally uncluttered. At far left are the audio level sliders, arranged vertically. A large window houses the volume indicators, time and channel information, indicators to show whether Audio B (SAP) and Stereo are present, the Timer setting, and indicators and switches for audio B Set, Mono (forced with stereo present), Battery charge, and TV/VCR.

The blank black pedestal front is actually a flap covering pedestal controls for both the VCR and the TT. We've already covered the VCR controls. The TT end includes switches for ALC on/off, Tuner/Audio 2Ch (simulcast)/line, and buttons and switches for Audio Level on/off, Normal/Select tuner presetting, Band, Up tuning, Down tuning, Skip, AFT on/off, and display Dimmer high/low.

On the rear panel are the AC cord and two AC convenience outlets (one switches), and a jack for charging an external battery, all at the far right. Next to them are the VHF and UHF RF inputs and outputs. At the left are switches for Unified/Normal remote selector and Normal/CATV channel sequence selector plus jacks for a CATV adapter, stereo audio/video inputs and outputs, and one for Control. The Control jack is for use in a Dimensia system and the CATV adapter lets you mix one scrambled channel in with unscrambled ones during timer recording.

The remote control supplied with the

unit (one of the four it will work with) is the only way to set the time and timer. For these functions it uses its Program, Clear, and display buttons and the 10-digit keypad.

**Operation.** One of the hallmarks of RCA products is a disarming simplicity. The 975 is no exception. Since we netted one of the first available machines for our review, it arrived without a manual. We found no need to ask for one to use the system. It's that simple. There are no tricks. The controls are clearly labelled. If



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## Videotests

a doubt arose, the correct procedure was the obvious one, though sometimes the appropriate control was on the remote control instead of the console. One of its few weaknesses is that some controls—like clock and timer setting—are only on the

remote.

As a convertible it's also easy to use. Flip down the front flap, and slide the right half of the VCR forward. Putting it back is equally easy. The plugs at the back align themselves. No fuss. No messy wires.

Hooking it up to the remainder of your audio/video system is simple and conventional. Even for Dimensia all you need do is connect one extra wire for control. It is one of the friendliest machines around.

**Performance.** Picture quality is as

### Test Report: RCA MVR975HF Convertible VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS Tuner DATA

**Date of test:** August 1985

**Suggested retail price:** \$1550

**Weight:** 6.4 pounds, VCR without cassette or battery; 10.8 pounds Tuner-Timer (TT)

**Dimensions:** 3-3/4 x 9-3/16 x 10-1/8 inches (h/w/d), VCR; 4-1/8 x 17-1/8 x 12-3/4 inches (h/w/d), TT

**Power requirements:** 12VDC, 7.3W, VCR without camera; 120VAC, 60Hz, 58W, TT

**Tape format:** VHS Hi-Fi

**Tape speeds:** SP, LP, SLP

**Play speed select:** automatic

**Still frame:** yes

**From advance:** on remote only

**Slow motion:** yes, variable only from the remote

**Speed play:** 2X, accessible only from remote

**Rapid search:** see Cue & review

**Cue & review:** 5X, SP; 9X, LP; 15X, SLP

**Visible FF and Rew:** no

**Fast forward/rewind time:** 4-3/4 minutes for T-120 cassette

**Remote pause:** through camera jack

**Remote:** IR wireless with TV/VCR. Play, Pause, Record, Stop, Fast Forward (Search), Rewind (Search), Frame Advance, Slow, Memory, 2X, variable slow Up/Down, tracking Up/Down, Power, Program, Clear, Display, Counter/Time Remaining, 10-digit keypad, Channel Up/Down. Also works with small Digital Command Center, large Digital Command Center, and Dimensia remote controls

**Separate eject:** yes

**Counter digits:** 4, or time remaining

**Counter memory:** yes

**Program start locotar/Index/cue:** auto index recording from stop mode

**Audio dub:** yes to linear tracks only

**Video dub:** yes, erases Hi-Fi track

**Auto rewind:** yes

**Stereo:** yes

**Hi-Fi:** yes

**Tuning method:** voltage synthesis, 133 channel

**Channel selectors:** Up/Down scan on VCR; scan and direct access or remote

**Preset method:** Add/Erase from 80-position tuning memory

**Tuning capability:** 2 to 13, 14 to 83, A-

5 to A-1, A to 1, J to W, W+1 to W+23

**AFT:** switchable

**Channel lock:** yes

**Timer:** 8 programs, 1 year; plus timed manual recording

**Auto channel-change:** yes

**Accessories:** remote control and batteries, earphone, antenna cables and transformers

## RESULTS & RATINGS

**Horizontal resolution:** 240 lines

**S/N, video luminance:** 41.8dB, unweighted; 45.3dB, weighted

**S/N, chroma AM:** 48.5dB

**S/N chroma PM:** 41.6dB

**Audio frequency response:** 20-20,000Hz +0.1/-2.1dB, Hi-Fi; 80-12,000Hz, SP; 100-8000Hz, LP; 100-6300Hz, SLP, linear (-3dB)

**Dynamic range, Hi-Fi:** 81dB

**S/N, linear audio:** 39dB

**Audio distortion:** 0.033%, Hi-Fi; 2.3%, linear

**Overall picture quality:** excellent

**Audio quality:** excellent

**Ease of operation:** excellent

**Overall performance:** excellent

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good as the best we've seen in the VHS format. Horizontal resolution is 250 lines and video S/N is 41.8dB, unweighted, and 45.3dB, weighted. Chroma AM S/N is 48.5dB, the highest we've measured, and chroma PM S/N is 41.6dB. The overall picture is excellent.

Hi-Fi audio has a dynamic range of 81dB and frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hertz,  $\pm 0.1/-2.1$ dB. The linear tracks also have excellent (for linear) frequency response ( $-3$ dB) of 80-12,000Hz at SP, 100-8000Hz at LP, and 100-6300Hz at SLP. If we had used the  $-10$ dB points as many manufacturers do on VCR spec sheets, low-end linear frequency would have been to 50 Hertz or better at all speeds, and high-end frequency response would increase a third of an octave at the two lowest speeds. Total harmonic distortion was 0.033 percent on Hi-Fi, and 2.3 percent on the linear tracks.

**Conclusion.** We really like this VCR. It ranks among the best in VHS picture and sound quality, and in ease of operation despite its dependence on the remote. It offers the best lineup of features, not the least of which is portability. 

## Cassette Cassoulet

*continued from page 89*

gers intact. When a chef writes a recipe, he's behind a typewriter. On video, he's actually doing it. Chatty cooking tips come naturally: while preparing her guacamole, Jane Butel explained how to pick a ripe avocado and why dark, prickly ones are better than smooth greens.

Admittedly cooking videos, or any "how to" tapes, are like X-rated videos. They can't replace the real thing. But, like X-rated tapes, cooking videos can give you new ideas about technique, nuance, flavor, and seasoning.

After watching Chef Madeleine Kamman bone a duck, you want to try it, too. After Jacques Pepin dices an onion, you're ready to play kitchen magician. When Judith Olney scrambles eggs with her *fingers*, you might agree that this is both an efficient and sensuous way to do the job.

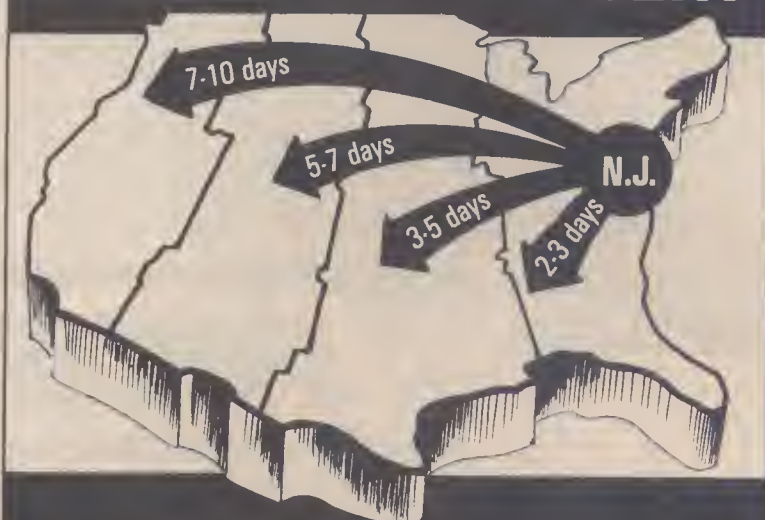
As Claiborne says, cooking videos are inspiring because they are like security blankets—or security aprons. "An apron is absolutely essential for comfort and security," he admits. "I mean that. I find it very difficult to cook unless I have the security of an apron tied around me. I think that's true of video, too. If you watch the preparation of food it gives you a great deal of security and I think this is one of the things that gives pleasure to cooking. If you feel insecure with what you're doing, then it's not nearly as much pleasure."

On video, an enthusiastic chef can literally demonstrate the joy of cooking. You learn how to shop for the food, how to pick the best cuts and know when a fruit or vegetable is ripe. You see every step of

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preparation and how to turn raw ingredients into edible art. Each cook has a special way of instilling confidence. Claiborne's no-nonsense style seems to say "Come on now, I'm doing it and so can you." Jane

Butel's warm smiles say "Making this dish is easy!" Julia Child makes cooking seem like an amusing hobby while Judith Olney implies that cooking can be a sensuous adventure.

When you watch a tape like Craig Claiborne's, with 20 recipes, you're not thumbing through a book, you're really observing—an important difference. While you might pass up "Chlodnik" (a shrimp

#### SELECTED VIDEOGRAPHY

##### Basic New Orleans Cuisine.

Color. 1985. 6 dishes. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$9.95. Kartes.

##### Bocuse a la Carte

Color. 1984. Paul Bocuse. French recipes. 13 volumes. 30 min. Beta. VHS. \$9.95 each. Kartes.

##### Cake Decorating

Color. 1981. Writing, flowers, and sugar molds. 60 min. Beta. VHS. \$59.95. Vision.

##### Craig Claiborne's New York Times Video Cookbook

Color. 1985. Gourmet cooking. 106 min. Beta. VHS. \$29.95. Warner.

##### Guide to Chinese Cooking

Color. 1985. Ken Hom. 84 min. Beta. VHS. \$49.95. Videocraft.

##### Guide to Good Cooking

Color. 1985. Jacques Pepin. Tips and techniques from a master French chef. 87 min. Beta. VHS. \$49.95. Videocraft.

##### Guide to Italian Cooking

Color. 1985. Giuliano Bugialli. 104 min. Beta. VHS. \$49.95. Videocraft.

##### Guide to Tex-Mex Cooking

Color. 1985. Jane Butel. 89 min. \$43.95. Videocraft.

##### How to Cook Japanese Dishes

Color. 1985. Chu Shinjima. 3 vols. Sushi, Tempura, Teriyaki & Sukiyaki. Comes with chopsticks. \$39.95. each. Increase.

##### Madeleine Kammon Cooks

Color. 1984. 2 vols. Beta. VHS. \$39.95 each. Baffico.

##### The Master Cooking Course

Color. 1984. Craig Claiborne, Pierre Franey. Gourmet cooking. 57 min. Beta (Hi-Fi, mono). VHS (Hi-Fi, Dolby B, mono). LV. \$29.95. MCA.

##### Mucho Gusto

Color. 1985. Jorge Galve. Spanish dishes. 6 volumes. In Spanish with English subtitles. Beta. VHS. \$19.95 each. Video Latino.

##### The Slim Gourmet

Color. 1984. Barbara Gibbons. narr. by McLean Stevenson. Low calorie gourmet dishes. Beta. VHS. \$39.95. Media.

##### Szechwan and Northern Dishes

Color. 1981. Rhoda Yee. Mu Shu Pork, Mongolian Beef, Pon Pon Chicken, and other Chinese dishes. 60 min. Beta. VHS. \$49.95. 3/4 inch U-matic. \$59.95. RMI

##### Thanksgiving Dinner

Color. 1985. 10 dishes. 30 min. Beta. VHS. \$9.95. Kartes.

##### The Way To Cook

Color. 1985. Julia Child. 6 volumes on Poultry; Meat; Vegetables; Soups; Salads & Bread; Fish & Eggs; First Courses & Desserts. Beta. VHS. \$29.95 each. Knopf.

##### Wok Before You Run

Color. 1984. Steven Yan. How to cook with a wok. Beta. VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

#### SOURCES

**Baffico/Breger Video**, 915 Broadway, New York, NY 10010. (212) 254-3900.

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and beet soup) in a book because the recipe looks too complex, or the name too funny, when you watch it being made, you see it's not so hard after all. Witnessing Craig effortlessly shuck a shrimp makes you eager to challenge those little suckers like the kitchen Goliath you really are. Of course, if shrimp is simply too expensive, you can fast-forward to more economical morsels. In fact, I asked *The New York Times* chef if he chose dishes with price in mind.

"It wasn't a question of money at all," he said. "I wasn't told what to prepare. I simply picked my favorite recipes, ones I enjoy making and ones that are not too elaborate to prepare." As you browse the video racks, you'll find that most chefs follow Claiborne's lead. Although I recall that Chef Kamman's tape bulges with rich (both belly fattening and wallet thinning) shrimp and duck recipes, most cooks balance expensive and cheap dishes. A few recipes away from the shrimp dish on Craig's tape is Indian Keema with Peas. With "keema" (ground lamb) 99 cents a pound in my store, how could I go wrong?

Speaking of keema, it's time to be cynical again. How necessary is it to actually watch the video tape? The truth is that, depending on your expertise, you don't always have to watch at all. I made Indian Keema with Peas just from the recipe card that came with the tape. I skipped Craig's demonstration and it came out fine. But what I didn't see, until I watched the tape while my girlfriend and I ate, was what "high heat" meant and what onions cooked "till they are wilted" look like. Knowing that would have made my cooking less worrisome (at one point I wondered whether my onions were properly wilted).

My success aside, let me add that cooking with video is definitely preferable, and that video does instill confidence. I knew I couldn't really go too far wrong with a simple keema dish. But would I try to de-vein shrimp without watching Craig first? No way!

On the question of following a recipe religiously, say swapping lime juice for lemon, I discovered from Craig himself that such matters should not inhibit home cooks. "I'm not offended by people who alter my recipes to suit their own palates," he said with a light laugh. "That's up to the viewer. Of course, there are limits. A friend told me he had the best recipe for chili con carne but I saw there was no chili powder in it. There are absurd points one can go to by leaving something out."

I asked Craig about the problem of actually cooking while watching the tape. Isn't it asking for trouble, having the VCR and all the kitchen appliances going at once? What if your TV isn't even in the kitchen? "I think it would be awfully nice if your place is large enough and you can afford to have a cassette player in the kitchen," he allowed. "But I don't think it's essential. You can watch the preparation of a dish, start and stop, then go back into the kitchen."

When I'm cooking with video, I watch the tape through to get a complete idea of how it's done and how much time I have for each step. If something is complex, like boning a chicken, then I do that in the living room first, while I watch. I set up a table top or an ironing board, and chop along with the chef. Stopping and starting the tape, going from TV to kitchen is hardly a strain, and usually not necessary once you've watched once and seen how it's all done. My main complaint about some of these tapes is that they don't always include recipe booklets so that you have to sit around freeze-framing and jotting down the ingre-

dient lists flashed on the screen.

But what's so convenient about conventional cookbooks that snap shut every time you open them, that make you turn to different pages ("for how to baste, see Volume II, page 978"), and that are covered with jam stains and butter bits? I've yet to encounter the nightmare of a VCR popping out toast or a blender turning my tape into Fuji-fudge.

These are minor points and they shouldn't discourage anyone. When you warm up to video cookery, you'll find it can stand the heat in the kitchen at least as well as you.

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## Wild Rice

1/2 cup wild rice

1 Tbs. butter

1/4 cup finely chopped onion

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1-1/4 cups chicken broth

1. Rinse rice in several changes of cold water.
  2. Melt butter in small saucepan and add onion. Cook until wilted. Add rice and stir. Salt and pepper to taste.
  3. Add the broth and bring to boil. Cover closely, simmer 45 minutes or until rice "blooms" and is tender. If any liquid remains, uncover and cook until liquid evaporates, stirring occasionally.
  4. Use rice to stuff boned chicken legs.
- Yield: 2 servings.*

## Creamed Chicken Liver Sauce

3 chicken livers, picked over to remove any connecting membranes

3 Tbs. butter

1-1/4 cups heavy cream

2 Tbs. finely chopped shallots

1/4 cup dry white wine

1/2 cup fresh or canned chicken broth

Salt, if desired

Freshly ground pepper

1. Heat 2 Tbs. of butter in a small skillet and add chicken livers. Cook over moderately high heat, turning the livers as necessary, until they lose their raw look. Set aside.
2. Meanwhile, heat remaining butter in a saucepan, and add the shallots. Stir until wilted.

3. Add wine and broth to shallots and cook until the liquid is reduced to about 1/4 cup.
  4. Add 1/4 cup of cream to livers and bring to a simmer. Cook 2 minutes and remove from heat.
  5. Add remaining cream to shallots and cook over high heat about 3 minutes or until reduced to about 1 cup. Pour sauce and chicken liver mixture into a blender. Blend on high speed to a fine, smooth liquid sauce. Add salt and pepper to taste.
  6. Return sauce to saucepan and reheat. Serve with boned chicken legs.
- Yield: About 1 cup.*

(from Craig Claiborne's *New York Times* Video Cookbook)



## Camcorders

continued from page 93

up to eight edit commands in memory to simplify assemble editing. Also useful is the company's optional TT-100 three-week/four-event tuner/timer which turns the CCD-V8K into a two-hour home VCR (using 120 minute 8mm tape). Playback is via a TV or monitor or the bright one-inch EVF. At slightly under 6 lbs. with cassette and battery, by my measurement, it is easily portable and comes with a shoulder strap and a head cover to protect the lens when the unit is used for home recording.

My chief quarrel with Sony regarding the camera section's operating features is the absence of autofocus (or electronic assistance to manual focus, as provided, along with autofocus, on the Zenith camcorder). Although it is easy to focus this camcorder properly, the depth of field for proper focus is very shallow in low light and the margin of error too great. Autofocusing is needed both for the home video neophyte and the experienced video user

who may prefer point and shoot simplicity.

The Zenith VM6100 VHSC camcorder was smallest and second lightest of the models tested. From a practical standpoint its feature package is hard to fault: EVF, automatic iris with fade (to a white blank), three way auto/adjust white balance power zoom with macro and VCR controls arranged for easy use on a Zenith-developed soft touch plate. I also liked the electro-optical image-sensing chip at the heart of the camcorder's autofocus system. It not only works swiftly and well, but provides a focusing aid when in the manual focusing mode. Playback from this camcorder is through the EVF, any TV, or standard VHS recorder via a battery-powered cassette adapter accessory. Or you can dub onto standard Beta or VHS cassettes. The only flaw in the basic appeal of the VM6100 is the 20 minute cassette. If you are taping a graduation ceremony or a Little League baseball game, you could grow tired of changing cassettes every 20 minutes. Otherwise I found taping with this camcorder very satisfying.

All the models tested met the most basic requirement for video equipment: producing a lifelike picture with good quality sound. Overall the Betamovie, with its SuperBeta detail enhancement circuitry and CCD imager, took top honors. In video terms, Betamovie is one old crock of a camcorder—the original was introduced two long years ago—but before you label this record-only machine a has-been, audition the newest versions. Indoors and out, Sanyo's Betamovie was relentlessly faithful to the original colors, with extremely low color noise, excellent image clarity and reasonably good performance in low and dim light. In very low light videotaping, Zenith's VHSC camcorder responded slightly better, automatically kicking in gain

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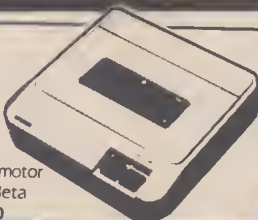
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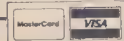
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up (in AGC auto mode) for its Saticon tube without much loss in picture quality or color reproduction. In normal light shooting its resolution—unmeasured, subjective—seemed very high, nearly equal to the Sanyo which was played back on a SuperBeta-capable VCR.

Picture quality of the Magnavox VHS camcorder was quite good, too, in terms of resolution, exposure and color purity. Proper hues and chromatic levels were maintained throughout. Indeed, this camcorder would have sprinted into the lead in this test category were it not for the effort needed to overcome a slow, balky autofocus system (I tested for picture performance in all manual and automatic modes).

Sony's CCD-V8 is arguably the only 8mm unit that could rival half-inch equipment in resolution. This camcorder held its own in picture clarity and color precision. Only in extremely low lighting did the 8mm camcorder fall somewhat short of its half-inch competitors. My experience with the Sony camcorder convinces me, however, that 8mm will be a future force in the camcorder market. Eight millimeter units promise more innovative design changes than Beta or VHS, if for no other reason than the very small size of the cassette.

All of the camcorders were good, none spectacular when it came to audio. A built-in monophonic condenser mic, either omnidirectional (for all sounds) or unidirectional (for specific, directed sound) was standard fare. All camcorders offered terminals for external mic input, and all were very good at not picking up zoom lens motor or VCR operation noises. I was disappointed that the sound quality of the 8mm Sony was not head and shoulders above the pack. Unlike the half-inch camcorders which use a linear audio track, the 8mm format specifies AFM—audio frequency modulation sound—using a two head rotary recording system for its mono audio, which is similar to Beta Hi-Fi and VHS Hi-Fi.

### Assault on Batteries

The Magnavox camcorder is the single battery charge champ: 120 minutes of continuous shooting on a single charge is the manufacturer's spec, and under fire the camcorder came close to the mark. Even with all automatic and power features operating, the Magnavox camcorder provides what seems like unlimited power in the field. Recharging the Maggie battery takes about 100 minutes. Two batteries can be charged at the same time—in just under three and a half hours. Sanyo's NP-11 Betamovie battery provides 100 minutes of continuous recording. To Sanyo's credit, it points out in the instruction manual that with the focus switch set to auto and the zoom lens engaged for a variety of long or short scenes, actual battery life is 70 percent of the continuous recording time. While this is also true for the other camcorders tested, the manufacturers fail

to say so. A tip of the VIDEO hat to Sanyo for being upfront.

Continuous shooting battery life is one hour on Sony's CCD-V8K. The Sony ACP-80VC AC pack and BCA-80 battery charge adapter used in tandem will recharge a battery in one hour. Three batteries can be recharged simultaneously in about eight hours. Zenith offers three nickel cadmium battery packs that are good for 30 minutes to one hour. I used the VAC403 which provided an honest 45 minutes of recording. Charging time is one hour.

Judging the winner wasn't easy. It was almost a dead heat. But as the chart

shows, the Zenith camcorder comes out of the battle slightly ahead on points. It doesn't do any specific thing significantly better than its competitors but it does everything well enough to provide first class results and an overall feeling of satisfaction. It is encouraging when a manufacturer has taken an excellent product—the first VHSC camcorder was launched in 1984—and made it better. Let me add, however, that before you stride off to your video shop you still have to consider which camcorder is best for you. Because of the closeness of the competition, we hesitate to dismiss the also-rans. Moreover, people

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who have had the joy, at least once in their lives, of taping with any of these camcorders will understand that their overall quality is so high it is unfair to designate a 'loser'.

People who make the camcorder their first video investment might be better off with the Sony 8mm system and its optional tuner/timer, which allows 120 minutes of off-the-air time-shift recording at home. Similarly, for someone who owns a Beta or VHS VCR and has never used a video camera before, the point and shoot simplicity of Sanyo's Betamovie and Magnavox VHS videomovie makes these camcorders attractive products as well.

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## James Cagney

*continued from page 98*

the big screen.

Cagney had a voice that curled around cadences like the voices you heard on streetcorners. He had a quick kineticism that made cameramen stay on their toes.


It was *The Public Enemy* that crystallized Cagney's persona, though he had four films behind him. Cagney's portrayal of Tommy Powers, a vicious bootlegger, typed him into the role of the scoundrel that audiences loved to hate. In a classic ending, Powers gets dumped on his mother's doorstep by a rival mob—a standing corpse who literally falls into the living room when the door is opened.

Cagney was one of the few major stars who could be killed off onscreen. Studios shied away from scripts that had Clark Ga-

ble or John Wayne die for the sake of a good story, but after *Public Enemy* James Cagney could be shot, blown up, double-crossed and revenged, and audiences cheered.

And of course there's the grapefruit scene. *Public Enemy*, with almost unrelieved misogyny, has Cagney smear a half-grapefruit in Mae Clarke's face, just because she's making a little small talk at breakfast. She wasn't portrayed as a nag but Tommy Powers is sick of her, and tells her so with one of the most shockingly funny gestures in screen history. Though the scene last only seconds, it has lingered in the memory for over 50 years.

*Public Enemy* is on video moratorium at CBS/Fox, though you can pick up a CED copy that looks pretty good. Like many Warner films from the 1930s, it only survives in re-release length, cut somewhere along the line to better fill double bills.



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Cagney's output at Warner during the 1930s was staggering. Despite periods of voluntary withdrawal and studio suspension, he made 39 films in his first 12 years in Hollywood. All but two were for Warner Bros. This leaves the major responsibility for videocassette release to CBS/Fox and its specialized subsidiary, Key Video.

## Cagney Gold

Key is about to unveil a second 24-karat series which, with any luck, will include *Blonde Crazy*, *Taxi*, *Lady Killer*, *Jimmy the Gent*, *G Men*, *Ceiling Zero*, *Boy Meets Girl*, and *Strawberry Blonde*. These missing gems run a gamut of Cagney portrayals—at least three brilliantly exploit his marvelous sense of comedy. People remember Cagney as a tough kid, or a gangster, but few recall how quick he is as a comic actor. Even fewer, in spite of his Oscar-winning role as George M. Cohan in *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, think of him the way Cagney thinks of himself—as a song-and-dance man.

The five Warner films now in video stores are to be treasured. It is as a dancer that Cagney livens up *Footlight Parade*, a 1933 Busby Berkeley musical that reunites him with Joan Blondell. The plot reads like a "could have been" for Cagney's persona. Confronting the problem of talking pictures and dying vaudeville, a dynamic Broadway director comes up with the idea of busing dancers around from cinema to cinema and sandwiching their act between pictures. The production numbers are staggering—the costs are weakly justified as affordable because of the large number of movie houses employing them. But logic never entered Busby Berkeley's head, and *Footlight Parade*, made and released in the same year as *42nd Street* and *Gold Diggers of 1933*, confirmed his reputation as the king of musical excess. Cagney, on the other hand, comes across not at all silly or campy. His tireless tempo rubs off on the whole enterprise, and the lights come up after *Footlight Parade* on an audience as exhausted as the onscreen chorus girls must be.

Three big musical numbers end the show, and their applause is well-earned, since Cagney has spent the better part of a screen hour scrambling for money, rehearsal space, contracts, ideas and financial saviors. At least he has Joan Blondell to keep him company while he stays up nights; their onscreen rapport is never so much in evidence as here. Finally, after a monumental number called "By a Waterfall" takes its place in Berkeley film history, Cagney gets to step in for an injured leading man to do "Shanghai Lil" with Ruby Keeler. She's flat but he's glorious, tapping on a saloon counter while searching for his Chinese girlfriend before shipping out with the Navy. It ends with marching troops that turn, in a classic Berkeley aerial shot, into Franklin Roosevelt's face and then the NRA eagle. But it's Cagney we remember.

Two years later, Warner's took a bite of Culture with a lavish Max Reinhardt screen

treatment of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Although it never lived up to its hype, some of it is magical. Dick ("Pettin' in the Park") Powell was Lysander, Joe E. Brown was Flute, Frank McHugh played Quince, and Mickey Rooney, 11 years old and even then monopolizing the screen, played Puck with an incessant hyena laugh. Cagney was an unlikely but enjoyable Bottom, who awoke from a nap with the head of a jackass to find Queen Hippolyta in love with him. Making no effort to sound "Shakespearean"—no one did—Cagney brought his urban brogue to the enchanted forest where Reinhardt de-

signed shimmering fairies and dewy landscapes.

By the time Cagney made *Angels With Dirty Faces* and *The Roaring Twenties* in 1938 and 1939, subtle changes in the Cagney films were evident. First of all, Cagney was very much a star. Though he never expected films to be a vehicle for his ego, he was proud of his achievements. He knew what they stood for in terms of money, and he could afford to say "Nuts!" to the whole shebang and go home to his farm on Martha's Vineyard if the studio didn't like what he demanded. After a billing squabble in *Ceiling Zero*, Cagney walked



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out of Warner's—just like Bette Davis had—demanding the studio reevaluate what he was worth to them.

## Leaving Warner Behind

He went to a short-lived production company called Grand National and made two minor films. Both have survived in decent public domain versions, with the best extant copies being circulated by Kartes Video Film Classics. *Great Guy* has Cagney fighting corruption as a deputy inspector of the Bureau of Weights and Measures. Rather tame stuff, but he didn't pull any punches with the bad guys. *Great Guy* is cheap-looking but enjoyable. Cagney hasn't often been paired with brilliant directors—except for Howard Hawks and Michael Curtiz—and he surely wasn't going to change his record at Grand National.

His second film there, *Something to Sing About*, at least got him back on his dancing feet. Though the version now circulating is another re-release job—shorter than the original and retitled *Battling Hooper* to cash in on Cagney's tough guy reputation—it's a modest musical. Playing a band leader whisked off to Hollywood to become a bit movie star by playing a Cagney-like character, the Warner delinquent seems happy to be singing and dancing again—even when surrounded by B-players like Mona Barrie and Evelyn Daw, the worst leading lady of Cagney's career. He has a ballroom exhibition bit at the beginning of the film and a tap

number aboard a steamship with veteran hoofers Johnny Doyle and Harland Dixon, part of which is missing. William Frawley makes a nice comic foil as a studio press agent Cagney thwarts at every turn.

But Warner knew what to do with Cagney. The studio system was like that—exploitive, rushed, unmindful of such modern-day notions as a star's personal plans. It molded its stars and found pictures to fit the mold. What followed in Cagney's waning Warner Bros. days were three classics that feature the culmination of his work there.

*Angels With Dirty Faces* is the old good guy/bad guy friendship carried to its ultimate when childhood delinquents are separated during a petty theft. The reform school kid who went from crime to crime grew up to be Jimmy Cagney. The other one, the one who could run faster, grew up to be Pat O'Brien, the priest in the old neighborhood. *Angels With Dirty Faces* really begins when Rocky (Cagney) comes home from the stir to find Father Jerry counselling a gang of Rockys, the Dead End Kids. Rocky, of course, is their hero. Father Jerry, naturally, wants them to have a classier kind of hero. At the end of the film, when Rocky is sentenced to the electric chair and the Kids are proud of him for not turning yellow, Father Jerry visits him in prison. In their dynamic confrontation, O'Brien asks Cagney to go to the chair screaming for mercy, so the Kids

don't make a hero out of a mug.

Of course, Cagney makes a hero out of him anyway by leaving the sanctimonious Father Jerry to grieve and feel guilty. Neither Cagney nor O'Brien ever tipped their secret about whether or not Rocky really chickened out, or just did his old pal a favor and blew the hero myth for the Dead End Kids. By 1938, Warner's melodramas had more of this redeeming morality—no more public enemies wrapped and delivered for mama's doorstep. Cagney even has a monologue after he's sentenced, in which Rocky tells Father Jerry that it all started long ago—the old “society's really to blame/we can't help it” accusation. For some reason this speech is missing in the CBS/Fox release of *Angels With Dirty Faces*. Did Warner excise this socially-advanced speech because it thought the content politically incendiary?

Cagney's performance is one of his top three. It has a nervous intensity that the actor recalled from the thugs he grew up with on East 79th Street. Rocky greets his friends with “Whaddaya hear, whaddaya say?” and uses body English and hand gestures in a way that encapsulated Cagney for generations of impersonators.

## The Cowardly Angel

Cagney's walk down the last mile gives *Angels With Dirty Faces* as good an ending as *The Roaring Twenties*. With a straightforward but romantic focus, Cagney and

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*Blood on the Sun* (1945). Cagney's two-fisted newspaperman uncovers the key to Japan's imperialist scenario for invading first Manchuria, then all of the Far East. After a slow start, he gets Sylvia Sidney shipped off to safety and takes on a gang of Japanese strongmen at their own game: judo. Cagney transforms one of his private hobbies into the denouement of one of his pictures. That's what producing your own films can do for you, and it's exciting to watch. (The print quality is bad. It's fallen into public domain, and even the Kartes copies are fuzzy and splice-ridden.)

### Warner's White Knight

Then there's *White Heat*, which marked a 1948 return to Warner Bros. and Raoul Walsh for one of Cagney's greatest characters. Cody Jarrett is probably the only crazy person Cagney has ever played. A psychotic, mother-obsessed mobster plagued with migraines you wouldn't want to nurse, Jarrett finally blows himself up atop massive oil tanks in southern L.A., crying out to his dead mother that he's finally made it. "Top o' the world, Ma," Cagney screams as he shoots bullets into the oil tank that will become his funeral pyre.


It's an unredeemably nasty role, with a *tour de force* scene in the prison mess hall, where Cody goes berserk upon hearing of his mother's death. Virginia Mayo, in her good-natured trampy way, is his faithless wife. The unforgettable Margaret Wyckly is Ma, etched as firmly in our minds as in Cody's heart. Great stuff, this. *White Heat* is also on moratorium from CBS/Fox, which can only be called sadistic for withdrawing it. Not to worry, you CED collectors. You can still find it on disc.

*Mister Roberts* (1955) gave Cagney his broadest comedy role in years. Though his part, as the hated Captain of a Navy cargo ship, is smaller than those given Henry Fonda and William Powell, Cagney gets all the best moments. He blows his top at Roberts as he waters his palm tree, which stands for all the spit and polish the Captain has dealt out through the years. When the tree is destroyed by a vengeful Roberts in a moment that gives Fonda more glee than he ever exhibited in the rest of his career, Cagney bellows, "Whoooooo did it? Whoooooo did it?" and effortlessly brings the biggest laugh in the picture. (Two versions are out on video: Warner's washed-out cassette, with slightly better scanning of the CinemaScope screen, and RCA's CED release, with variable color quality that starts too red but levels out with acceptable tones, much better skin contrast and some objectionable quick-cutting where Warner scanned. Take your pick.)

Finally, in *Ragtime*, Cagney returned from a 20-year retirement to play a witty role as Police Commissioner Rhineland Walker, in charge of the detail to prevent Coalhouse Walker Jr. from blowing up the Morgan Library. Milos Forman persuaded

James Cagney to do what no one since 1961 had done, what no one has persuaded Cary Grant or Greta Garbo to do: return to movies. What's especially satisfying about Cagney's "comeback" in *Ragtime* is that, though he's 82 years old, and not as jaunty in step or as physically free to whirl around and face an especially obstreperous agitator the way he might have done in 1940, he still speaks like Jimmy Cagney.

Cagney's face is mesmerizing, as he sizes up his fellow actors and delivers Waldo's dialogue in the same unexpectedly rapid-fire manner that makes the somnolent, careful delivery of his fellow actors embarrassingly self-conscious. In one sweeping moment, as Cagney opens his mouth, we know we're in the presence of an actor who isn't looking for motivation, or subtext, or straining to make an impression. He is surrounded by generally excellent actors in *Ragtime*, but they fall away like so many dead leaves when the vigor of this octagenarian legend overtakes the screen as Rhineland Waldo assumes command.

There is also an overpowering sweetness to Cagney that is revealed only periodically through his career but is allowed full rein in *Ragtime*. Hard-nosed, yes. Professional, yes. But an actor of considerable heart, who transmitted to his roles a lifetime of character observation that makes his heroes and his villains and his crusty old men more than just tics and gestures. They are full-blooded, snappy, energetic, intensely humorous realizations of urban Americans, who may have started, like Cagney, on streetcorners but who have permeated every possible form of American cinema and made it more real. 

### Loudspeakers

*continued from page 105*

vibrate a paper or plastic cone to create sound waves, and "electrostatic" speakers, which vibrate a large flat membrane in a similar fashion. Dynamic speakers are far more popular than electrostatics, due mainly to the latter's high cost, and most speakers designed for video use are dynamic designs.

Most loudspeakers start with a wood or metal cabinet called an "enclosure" into which is built one, two, or three "drivers" or speaker cones. A special circuit called a "crossover network" divides the sound into highs, midrange, and lows and sends each part into its corresponding driver. A "tweeter" is designed to handle high-frequency sounds like bells, cymbals, and high-pitched violins. Midrange drivers are mainly used to reproduce the human voice and piano—often the most critical chore of any speaker. Finally, the large "woofer" is for low-frequency sounds like drums and bass guitars.

All these speaker elements are built into cabinets with a mindblowing array of different sizes, styles, and varieties. Despite



their differences, each design has the same goal: to create the flattest, most realistic sound possible. Most are "acoustic suspension" designs, isolating the speaker cone from the cabinet to produce just the right amount of bass and treble. One design enjoying some popularity these days is the "bass reflex" speaker, which uses a special cabinet to enhance low-frequency sounds, generating a lot of deep bass from a surprisingly small box. "Passive radiator" models use an extra speaker to generate more sound simply by picking up the sound and air vibrations of the main driver and reflecting them outward, to your ears. Some even have built-in amplifiers, which can be a good idea if your setup doesn't already have a good amp.

In general, the best speakers are three-way designs since they use a tweeter, mid-range, and woofer to handle the complete frequency range from the lowest lows (20 Hz) to the highest highs (20,000 Hz—the practical limit of human hearing). Less costly two-way speakers use only a tweeter and woofer, with the latter pressed into double duty to handle both the mid- and low-frequency chores. The lowest-priced speakers use only one driver and tend to sound lackluster at the extreme high and low ends of the spectrum.

These are only generalizations. In some cases a well-designed medium-sized two-way speaker can outperform a large three-way speaker. The only way you'll know for sure is to listen to them carefully in your dealer's showroom. Bring along a favorite tape or videodisc to compare the sound to what you already have—but be forewarned that often, the sound quality of even the best movies is miserable when compared to a good album or radio broadcast. Even if you plan to use the speakers purely for video purposes, it's a good idea to listen to audiophile-quality Compact Discs and records through the speakers to get an idea of what they sound like with wide-dynamic-range material.

Ask to hear several different models in various price ranges—even if you can't afford them—to get an idea of what compromises might come with the model you're considering. When you compare speakers, make sure the volume remains the same so that the comparison is as fair as possible. Pay close attention to subtle details like the crispness of percussive peaks, the warmth of the human voice, and the stroke of a violin bow across the strings. Ask yourself if the sound you hear is pleasing or if it has any irritating properties that might make the components difficult to live with over a long period of time. And be sure to take into consideration the differences of the store's listening environment vs. your own living room, which may have more "dead" spots (curtained windows, heavy carpet) and reflective areas (high ceilings and blank walls). And whatever you do, don't let the salesman pressure you into buying a speaker you're not sure you want. Better

*continued on page 168*

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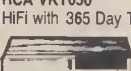
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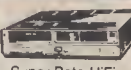
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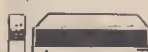
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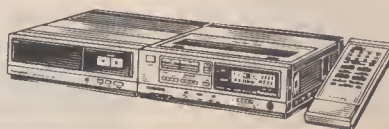
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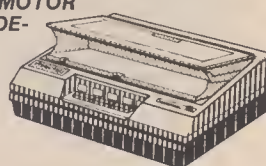
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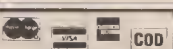
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## 99 Steps

continued from page 112

ing from the Tuner (displays channel), Aux (RF from a cable convertor), Input 1, Input 2, or Camera.

**87 VCR Mode.** Play, Record, Pause, Fast Forward/Rewind, etc.

**88 Tracking** indicated by a horizontal linear scale, which peaks to the right. One scale doubles for both regular and slow tracking.

**89 Stereo Audio Level**—switchable between Hi-Fi and linear.

**90 Video Level.** You can adjust the brightness of the recorded picture or let the VCR set it automatically, if you prefer. Also works in playback. A meter warns when this is set too high or too low.

**91 Video Chroma/Hue.** You can change the color of the recorded picture, or remove it entirely if you prefer, for black & white shows. Also works in playback.

## Convenience Features

**92 Editing Interface Jack.** To fully exploit all the aforementioned capabilities, you'll have to be able to interconnect two of our ultimate VCRs with an editing interface—again, as on the Sony SL-HF900.

**93 Detachable Power Cord.** That's the way a lot of decks came back in the mid-'70s, and we count it as a convenience when moving things around. Just so long as the cord doesn't disconnect itself when it's not supposed to.

**94 Multiple Switched/Unswitched AC Outlets.** These are great convenience features. The switched socket especially will let you turn on other accessories (like an FM tuner) when the VCR comes on in the timer mode.

**95 Selectable RF Channels.** Why just Channel 3 and 4? In some areas, both of these channels provide poor video playback. Some professional VCRs have RF modulators for Channels 5 and 6. So why not offer a choice of RF channels, including UHF?

**96 Time-Lapse Mode.** Since our ultimate VCR will have flying erase heads for surgically clean frame-by-frame edits, we should be able to offer extremely clean time-lapse effects—where one or two frames are recorded every five or ten seconds, or at some other interval.

**97 Multi-Standard Capability.** Instant Replay has proven that a good VCR can be built that will play virtually any worldwide video format on a regular NTSC

TV set, while still preserving the VCR's regular NTSC recording ability. So let's build in that feature too.

**98 Black Generator.** Some decks have this now, so you can record a stable video signal while using the VCR as a Hi-Fi audio deck.

**99 Color-Bar/Test Generator**—to set up your TV set and tapes for proper color balance anytime you want.

## Conclusion

We could list even more useful features we would want—but we've got to stop somewhere. Rest assured: there are enough good ideas in the previous paragraphs to keep even the most fastidious video designers busy for a few years. And lest anyone think some of these gems are ridiculous, impractical, or just plain impossible to produce, go back and reread our first "Ultimate VCR" story in the October 1982 issue. Some of the "futuristic" ideas mooted in that piece have since become almost commonplace—which only goes to show how fast the pace of video technology has been changing.

So even while we don't really expect any single VCR to emerge that's got "everything," chances are there's a machine or two on the drawing board that come mighty close. And to reiterate our idyllic request of three years ago, if and when anyone builds a prototype, we'll be glad to test it, free! But don't expect a written review for two or three years. A videophile likes to be thorough—especially if he can get his hands on a VCR that dreams are made of. ✓

## Irwin Allen

continued from page 116

finds not unappealing. "Lost in Space was one of our favorite projects," he says. "We've always been thinking about, considering, and hoping that we would eventually make a big film, and that's still true."

Not all of Allen's series were as well-blessed. The showman recalls his disappointment when ABC cancelled *The Time Tunnel* after only one season—despite what he claims were good ratings and, in his opinion, the most intriguing premise of all his various television series. If nothing else the show lasted long enough to demonstrate the depth of Allen's Emmy Award-winning special effects crew.

Allen has retained many of his personnel over the years, nurturing their talents like fine wine. Part of the creative and technical crew of *Alice in Wonderland*, for example, is composed of the same hardened veterans who've weathered many an Allen disaster blitz and/or journey through time and space. But *Alice* offered them little if any respite. "With all the magic that *Alice* has, [it] does lend itself to special effects abundantly," Allen says. "There will be a tremendous number of effects." He refuses to

elaborate, though he does let one teaser slip: "The classic [effect] is that Alice grows nine feet tall and then shrinks to nine-inches tall," chortles the showman. "And you see that before your very eyes!"

With the kind of distribution the film is getting, Allen's little "genius" should have a good chunk of the world as her stage. Beyond television and theatrical releases, videocassettes could immortalize the film and its star in the same way they've immortalized many previous magic moments in Allen's career. *Alice in Wonderland* could even be the catalyst for a long and involved relationship between Allen and videotape that far transcends cassette distribution. "I love it," sings the producer. "I'm looking forward to the time when motion pictures can be shot on videotape. Obviously it's going to be a dream once all the little problems are finally solved. We're just looking forward to the time when somebody's bold enough to say, 'OK, let's try to make a motion picture with tape.' "

### SELECTED VIDEOGRAPHY

#### Dangerous Mission

B&W. 1954. Victor Mature, Piper Laurie, Vincent Price, William Bendix. Produced by Irwin Allen. 75 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Nostalgia.

#### Lost in Space

B&W. 1965. Guy Williams, June Lockhart, Billy Mumy, Jonathan Harris. Pilot episode of the TV series. Produced and directed by Irwin Allen. 52 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Dimensions. \$39.95. Yesteryear.

#### The Poseidon Adventure

Color. 1972. Gene Hackman, Ernest Borgnine, Shelley Winters. Produced by Irwin Allen. 117 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. CBS/Fox.

#### The Sea Around Us

Color. 1953. Documentary based on Rachel Carson's book. Produced, written, and directed by Irwin Allen. 61 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.98. Blackhawk./Nostalgia.

#### The Swarm

Color. 1978. Michael Caine, Katharine Ross, Richard Widmark. Produced and directed by Irwin Allen. 116 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

#### The Towering Inferno

Color. 1974. Steve McQueen, Paul Newman, William Holden. Produced, action sequences directed by Irwin Allen. 165 min. Beta, VHS, CED. \$49.95. CBS/Fox.

### Sources

**Blackhawk Films**, One Old Eagle Brewery, Box 3990, Davenport, Iowa 52806 (319-323-9736).

**CBS/Fox Video**, 1211 Sixth Ave., 2nd floor, New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-819-3200).

**Video Dimensions** 110 E. 23rd St., Suite 603, New York, N.Y. 10010 (212-533-5999).

**Nostalgia Merchant**, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

**Warner Home Video**, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Calif. 91522 (818-954-6000).

**Video Yesteryear**, Box C, Sandy Hook, Conn. 06482 (800-243-0987).



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Though this particular production was shot in 35 millimeter film, Allen makes no attempt to hide his infatuation for videotape quality. "I think some of the taped shows I've seen on television are better than film," he says, "because I get a feeling of a third dimension in videotape which doesn't exist in flat film. Now it might be just an illusion, but it's a pretty damn good illusion." Allen foresees future production of motion pictures on videocassettes, and considers this something of a necessity for the filmmaker planning to survive. "I'm sure that when the [videotape] market is fully developed there will be a bigger market in videocassettes than there is in present day motion pictures," he concludes.

These possibilities, along with the four or five projects Allen has on the drawing board, are all material for the future. Right now the producer is content simply to anticipate the release of his musical voyage through the looking glass, the debut of a potential young star, and the delight he hopes it all brings to the largest possible audience. Which brings to mind an interesting idea. If things don't pan out one can't help wondering if Allen, in a rage, might resort to one final disaster film: *The Alice-in-Wonderland Inferno*. 

## Still Photography

*continued from page 120*

ability plans have been announced.

More recently, photo giant Konica demonstrated a prototype of its color "SVC" (Still Video Camera), which also conforms to the same standard. Unlike the Sony and Hitachi versions, which look like conventional 35mm cameras, Konica's resembles a paperback novel, with the lens and eye-piece arranged for vertical operation. It weighs a scant 2.2 pounds, has through-the-lens viewing, and sports a 3:1, 9-27mm, f2.8 zoom lens. The imaging device is a half-inch CCD that can record 180,000 pixels (picture elements). To keep track of your shots, an LCD control panel displays the recording track number, date and time, whether you're in the continuous shooting mode (up to eight frames per second), self-timer, and low-light warning indicator.

To see what you've shot, use the companion SV-P10 Still Video Player. And for hard-copy printout, a Video Printer can "develop" a 5 by 7-inch color still photo from any video source, including other video cameras, or still frames created by VCRs or computers. Because of that greater versatility, Konica intends to sell the color printer first. But when that will be, and at what price, hasn't been determined at press time.

Also targeting the potentially lucrative business of arranging a peaceful coexistence between regular snapshots and the usually more ephemeral video images is Fuji Photo. You probably saw Fuji's blimp during last summer's Olympic Games. The Fujix TV-Photo system, recently demon-

strated, is designed to play back electronically recorded images of conventional photos on TV. Images from color slides or prints are transferred onto the same type of video floppy disk used by the Sony, Hitachi, and Konica systems. You can use the player to step through the 48 pictures, one at a time, skip forward or backward, or even speed search. And with a bow to the all-electronic slide show, you can even set the player to automatically advance the frames over a variable period from one to eight seconds. Once again, no firm decision on availability has been announced for the U.S., although it is now on sale in Japan.

## Still Holding Back

So while the electronic technology seems all ready to go, there's still some reluctance to launch a full-scale rollout of electronic still cameras. Videotape has all but swamped the super-8 movie makers. The economics and appeal of electronic still photography is still an unknown quality. Just how much money is the consumer ready to pay for a snapshot, regardless of how it is made? For many amateur purposes, it's likely that the era of conventional silver-based photography is far from dead.

While Sony and others were at work on their electronic disk camera, Kodak was unveiling its own film-based "disc" camera. Introduced in 1982, the tiny (negatives about 8 by 10 millimeters) successor to the 110 cartridge (introduced in 1972) and the even-larger 126 cartridge (*circa* 1963) hasn't been selling as well as Kodak would have liked. Although compact and extremely easy to use (not to mention inexpensive to buy—some disc cameras cost only \$20), the less-than-enthusiastic way in which the new format has been received says a lot about the changing tastes of the average consumer/photographer.

Smaller-size negatives yield poorer-quality pictures. Even the most undiscriminating photographer can easily appreciate the sharper, less grainy images made possible by the larger negatives (24 by 36mm) used in the popular 35mm cameras, many of which are now as easy to use as any point-and-shoot Instamatic. But since the resolution of the new electronic still cameras is less than that of even the cheapest disc or 110 camera, it's unlikely that it's ready to knock conventional silver-based photography off its long-established perch. Higher-resolution pictures would help, but that must await the development of other means of storing video images as electronic information. One of the latest trends sweeping the broadcast-television industry is the new artform of "digital video effects." Expensive gadgets like Ampex's ADO (Ampex Digital Optics) or Quantel's Mirage integrate the twin technologies of video and digital computer graphics to produce those elaborate visual special effects you've been seeing on television with increasing regularity.

By digitizing a video signal, a computer


can be used to create all sorts of trick effects that can dazzle the viewer. The examples we've all seen on the tube include the opening and closing graphics for sports specials like the Super Bowl, those fast-paced *National Enquirer* spots, the Clio award-winning Sony Walkman commercial, and commercials for Mercedes-Benz, Pontiac's Fiero, and many others. Many of these spots are created by Digital Productions in Los Angeles, which uses the \$20 million Cray X-MP super computer as a sophisticated electronic paintpot. The company also created the digital animation for the battle sequences in last summer's *The Last Starfighter* as well as the planetscape of Jupiter for *2010*.

## When the Resolution Comes

Even more elaborate digital special effects are on the drawing boards, awaiting only the advent of larger computers and less-expensive means of storing digital information. For the average consumer, a picture is just a picture and either it looks sharp or it looks grainy. To get away from the "snapshot look," higher-resolution video systems and digital storage media will be needed—but none of them will be cheap. In the future, the two technologies will have to go hand in glove. Consider, for example, that the article you are reading is being composed on an IBM Personal Computer with a storage capacity of about 320,000 bytes (one byte equals about one letter) and is roughly 15,000 bytes long. It fits comfortably on the \$3 floppy disk being used. But if that same disk were to store a digitized video signal, there would be room for only a few still pictures.

Electronic still cameras, whether analog or digital, just don't appear to be economical as yet, at least not for the average consumer. Rather than making original pictures with video still cameras, more consumers are probably interested in having their albums and slide trays of existing photos transferred to video floppies or videotape, making it easier to view them on the family TV while keeping the originals safely tucked away in a drawer or closet.

Some newer companies like Froelich Photo Video and Hybrid Image Technology are already selling multipurpose transfer systems to video dealers across the country, making it possible for the video enthusiast to take in tapes, slides, and prints for specialized dubbing or transfer to videotape.

But if the often-discussed electronic still camera seems to be having a slow time getting out of the starting gate, impending breakthroughs in inexpensive digital storage media like the often-discussed "bubble memories" or high-density computer chips could change all that. And when that breakthrough comes, the benefits for the photographic consumer will be so enormous that an entirely new world of consumer electronic products will descend upon us—including, without a doubt, an inexpensive and high-quality electronic still camera. 



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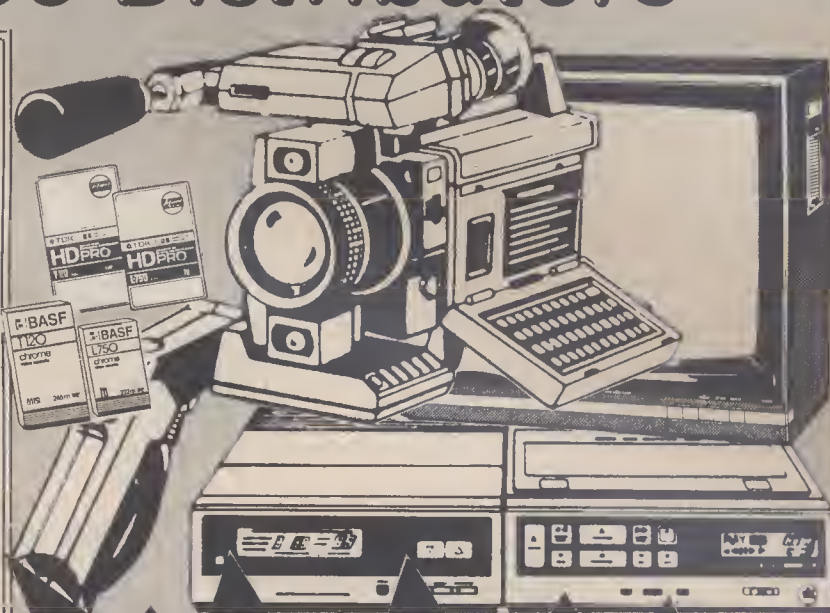
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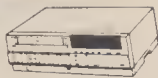
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# Off the Air

## The Last Word

### Scramble Fever

By Bob Brewin

**N**ext year Fidel Castro will have to start paying for the privilege of watching Cable News Network with his home satellite antenna and receiver. That's what his buddy, CNN owner Ted Turner, told the National Press Club.

Castro is only the most prominent of the million-plus home-dish owners throughout North America, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and northern South America who will mark 1985 as the last year of the Great Free TV Bird in the Sky. Starting next year most of the outfits that beam TV programs via satellite—led by the cable programmers, but also including broadcasters interested in protecting the privacy of their “raw” feeds—will have all their satellite signals protected by reasonably sophisticated encryption systems. And it will take cold cash to unlock them.

Simple economics stand behind this scrambling drive. A decade ago, when Home Box Office set off a communications revolution by leasing transponders on the RCA Satcom 1 satellite to distribute its programming to cable systems, earth stations were strictly big-buck corporate items. Teleprompter Corp. (now Group W) gladly forked over \$100,000 a pop to buy dishes for its cable systems.

First, the regulations went. The FCC decided any-

one could put up a TVRO (Television Receive Only) dish without a survey. Then technology worked to drive the price down—primarily the technology of the satellites themselves.

Designed to serve the continental United States, the domestic communications satellites packed enough punch to reach dishes far from the territory domestic satellites could legally serve.

Fidel Castro could pick from among a half-dozen baseball games on as many birds. Farmers in rural West Virginia—for years hemmed by mountains and prevented from receiving any kind of television—put in backyard dishes and had hundreds of channels to choose from. Entrepreneurs in the English-speaking Central American country of Belize started pumping out Chicago Cubs games culled from WGN-TV to hardcore baseball fans.

These were the best of times for the home-dish business: the Comsats didn't create a global village, but they sure shrunk a continent and a half into a village that could watch *I Love Lucy* from dawn to dusk on simple receivers capable of being set up in a few hours by the average overeducated American male. Inuit natives in the Arctic Circle could tap into the latest HBO flick as easily as Manhattan yuppies. If there ever was a brief moment when television American style had a chance to become a global language, it was in this open-sky decade.

But the people who own television don't have a McLuhanesque vision. They see bucks earned and bucks

lost. All those dishes represented bucks lost. Scrambling and the sale of decoders represent bucks earned. Also, the cable operators—the original recipients of much of this programming—started to press the programmers to scramble for competitive reasons—no one will pay \$39 a month for what they can get free on a homesat.

As it now stands at least two private outfits along with the National Cable Television Association have various scrambling and national marketing schemes underway. By the end of this year much of the stuff in the sky will be for sale.

But not without a fight. SPACE, the home-satellite industry organization, has developed some clever schemes of its own. Take plans to scramble the signals of so-called “superstations” WGN, Chicago; WTBS, Atlanta; and WPIX and WOR, New York. There's only one reason to scramble them: cable-industry pressure. As Ann Russell, sales manager for Eastern Microwave, the company that uplinks WOR, candidly admits, “At 10 cents per subscriber per month, our feeling toward home-dish owners has been that anyone who wants the signal can take it. But scrambling is what the cable operators want. Their concern is the growing number of dishes out there and the SMATV operators.”

SPACE executive director Chuck Hewitt says it's ridiculous to scramble the superstations' signals, so he has come up with a ridicu-

lous—but probably workable—plan of his own. “We're thinking of leasing our own transponders and sending the superstation signals up there in the clear,” he says, “and we'll also sell the signals to cable operators on a non-profit basis. We'd compete with United Video.” This is the company that uplinks and charges a fee to cable operators for the WGN signal.

Besides this decidedly guerilla tactic, SPACE also plans to monitor any scrambling plan to insure that the encoded services are marketed fairly and live up to the mandates of last year's Cable Act, which calls for “reasonable” fees for homesat owners.

Fritz Attaway, an attorney with the Motion Picture Association of America, says he is not as concerned about the homesat owners as he is about foreign pirates. “I don't care if Joe Schmo on some ranch in Montana uses his dish to watch a movie on WGN. That's not our problem at all. What outfits like United Video have done is to make that signal free to all of Canada, Mexico, half of South America, and the Caribbean, where hotels, SMATV systems, and cable systems just pick up the signal for nothing.” In Attaway's view, scrambling will cut out about 99 percent of this piracy.

In a bottom-line world that's OK. But somehow, when scrambling does start, it's also going to make the world a bit bigger, a bit less benign, and definitely less villagely. You just can't put a dollar value on having Fidel Castro exposed to the best—and worst—of America via satellite.





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